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Hyatt Moore: celebrating the
colors of God's people ... p.12Celebrating 40 years of
advocacy for justice ... p17

59th year of publication

The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands are no more

The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Gereformeerde Kerken), in which many readers of CC were baptized and which came into being in 1886 under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper, have ceased to exist. That is a negative way of putting it, but it reflects the pain experienced by many in the formation of a new denomination. Perhaps a better way of putting it would be to say that after almost 40 years of negotiation the RCN finally reunited with the Netherlands Reformed Church (NRC), the

church it separated from nearly 120 years ago. A small Lutheran denomination also joined in the merger.

The final votes were taken at separate gatherings of the three synods held simultaneously in different churches in Utrecht Dec. 12. While the RCN and the Lutheran Church approved the merger with 80 percent majorities, the vote in the Netherlands Reformed Church was a squeaker. Approval required a two-thirds majority, and only 51 of 75 members said yes to the merger.

In recent years it sometimes looked as if the merger might be called off due to exhaustion. But maybe the participants became so exhausted by the drawn-out process that they finally decided enough is enough. Even after 40 years of talking, unanimity had not been achieved, and the enthusiasm of the participants was wearing thin, so the final decision was achieved by determination and not because all obstacles had finally been removed.

The new denomination, to be called The Protestant Church in

the Netherlands (PCN), will officially come into being May 1 of next year. With a membership of about 2.5 million, it will be the second largest denomination in the Netherlands, behind the Roman Catholic Church, which has about 5 million members. The Netherlands Reformed Church (NRC) has almost 1.9 million members, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (RCN) more than 660,000 members and the Evangelical Lutheran Church about 15,000.

Had the merger happened 40

years ago, the new denomination would have been almost as large as the Catholic Church in that country. All have been shrinking steadily over the years.

It still remains to be seen how many congregations resist the merger, for not nearly everyone is happy with the decision. Especially in the Netherlands Reformed Church, conservative churches have raised objections on many levels, convinced that the new church will probably lend impetus to the liberals within the

...continued on page 2



Celebrating the opening of the AACC 8th Assembly

All Africa Conference of Churches celebrates, deliberates in Cameroon

By Carol J. Fouke-Mpoyo

Yaounde, Cameroon (AAN) – Choir after choir, soloists and bands praised God with their voices, cymbals, drums and horns under sunny skies Sunday morning Nov. 23 in opening worship for the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) 8th Assembly here.

An estimated 8,000 worshippers from no fewer than 45 countries lined Yaounde's broad boulevard and spilled out the ends for the explosion of Gospel music, prayer and preaching, which launched the Nov. 23-27 continent-wide assembly, the highlight of African ecumenical life. The AACC last met in Assembly in 1997 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The avenue was a splash of yellow-gold dresses, shirts and headwraps; garments worn by several thousand of those present and sewn out of the distinctive

fabric of the Assembly. The fabric has the Assembly medallion, "Come, let us rebuild"; on a background of yellow-gold bricks.

Children wearing white and waving green branches welcomed the arriving worshippers with song and dance. The weather – less humid than in recent days – featured occasional clouds and breezes that seemed to waft strongly just as participants grew quiet for prayers and silent reflection.

"It is a glorious day to praise God," proclaimed the Rev. Dr. Kwesi Dickson of Ghana, the AACC's President.

In attendance were many dignitaries, including top ecumenical leadership from Africa, the incoming and outgoing general secretaries of the World Council of Churches, the Chair of the African Union (Joachim Chissano,

President of Mozambique), and the Prime Minister of Cameroon (Peter Mafany Musonge).

Welcoming President Chissano, Dickson said churches and the African Union share a common priority for the well being of the continent, along with an impetus toward unity. The AACC is everywhere the church is even though its headquarters is in Nairobi, he said.

Preaching on the Assembly theme taken from the Bible book of Nehemiah 2:11-18, was Msgr. Dr. Pierre Manini Bodho, President of the Christian Church of Congo.

Speaking of the impetus to realizing a greater African unity, he reminded those assembled that Christians unity is lodged elsewhere – in Christ. From West to East and from North to South, the churches need to bring our

See AACC celebrates ... page 2

News

Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

...continued from page 1

churches, for the old creeds and confessions (the forms of unity) will no longer have the same status in the PCN.

However, in many cities on the congregational level churches from the two main Reformed denominations have been worshipping and working together for years.

The RCN (Gereformeerde) were the most united in their support of the merger, but they, too, have their resisters. Ironically, since WWII many of them have become more liberal than the orthodox wing of the church that they left in the nineteenth century, one reason some of the latter are reluctant to welcome them back. Conservatives also raised objections to parts of the Lutheran confessions that have also been adopted because they don't exactly jibe with traditional Reformed teachings. The Lutherans, for example, provide for blessing of same-sex unions, and this will still be allowed, depending on the local church.

In contrast to the other two churches, the RCN have always seen the local congregation as basic, each church being quite independent. In the future, they will have to get used to belonging to a denomination that is structured much more hierarchically, not something everyone looks forward to. Some say they will find it very difficult to surrender their local independence and are afraid it will stifle initiative.

In the Netherlands Reformed Churches somewhere between 30 and 40 percent of councils were opposed to the merger, and the opposition among the regular members was even higher in some districts. Critics have suggested that the merger might generate all sorts of litigation, as refusenik congregations seek to retain possession of their property.

AACC celebrates

...continued from page 1

contribution so that the unity of Africa becomes real, he said. The church is not territorial or even purely African. It ties together the people of every race, language and society.

Msgr. Bodho, preaching in French, thanked the AACC for all its help over the past 40 years

In short, there was as much sadness and loss as there was joy at the merger, for each church had to say good-bye to something – and good-bye to its unique identity – to create the new denomination.

A. Van Eijk, president of the National Council of Churches in the Netherlands, offered his congratulations as did the Dutch council of bishops, and Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, said they had been praying for the success of the merger.

Some conservatives, however, called it a dark day. "We have all lost today," said one young preacher. "If we can no longer address the people on the basis of the confessions, if we may now confess different things, where is our so-called unity?"

"Nevertheless," he concluded, "God will not abandon the work of his hands."

Rev. L.W. Ruijgrok, chairman of the Committee to Preserve the Netherlands Reformed Church, declared, "They have definitively cast off the biblical Reformed identity of the church and exchanged it for a modern plural identity in which every person may follow his own truth. I am deeply convinced that no blessing will rest on a unity achieved at the expense of truth."

A chaplain from Amsterdam, Jaap Doolaard, said he was very happy with the merger. "In the new church there will be room for everyone, from left to right. As I see it, we've all been longing for such a plural church."

Rev. Richtsje Abma contrasted the way people of the two Reformed denominations approached church membership. Those of the NRC experienced the church as something that overarches you and that happens to you, while those in the RCN experience it as something they

take to hand. The first see themselves as members of a national church, while the latter think more locally. She expressed admiration for the more action-oriented mentality of those of the RCN and for their input in theological discussions, suggesting that each could learn from the other.

"Congregational autonomy still plays a strong role in RCN circles," observed Doolaard, "as well as that can-do approach. They put their shoulder to the wheel, while the NRC are quicker to say the good Lord will care for the church."

As for the Lutherans, they have a greater awareness of God's presence in the liturgy. In the Lutheran celebration of the Lord's Supper, for example, the participants do not pass the bread and wine to one another as in the Reformed churches, but they receive them from the priest, who personally conveys God's presence to each member.

A theologian who originally came from the Christian Reformed Churches said that the new church will never mold everyone to the same model of church. It will be a large tent, he said, with a number of different chambers occupied by different groups each of which will determine for itself what form it worship will take.

A de Heer reported in *Reformatorisch Dagblad* that after the results of the vote were announced and the RCN synod closed by reciting the Lord's Prayer in unison, the bells of the Nicolai Church were rung and other church bells joined in to celebrate the occasion. "The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands are no more," he concluded. "A new, united church has been born – but not one in which Abraham Kuyper ... would have recognized himself."

Conference of Churches has 172 member churches and associate members. Including national councils of churches in 41 countries, the AACC's constituency comprises 120 million Africans. The general assembly last met seven years ago in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Africans are destroying Africa, Mozambique's President warns churches

By Richard Nyberg

Yaounde, CAMEROON (ENI) – Africans are primarily responsible for the continent's devastation in recent decades, Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, the current chairperson of the African Union, said in a speech to about 800 African church leaders gathered in Yaounde.

"We must recognise that we Africans are destroying Africa," Chissano told delegates at the opening of the 8th General Assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC). He said that it was time to stop blaming the "invaders" and "colonialists," and he called on the church leaders to continue to help rebuild societies.

Countries in many parts of Africa, such as Nigeria, Mozambique, Liberia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan and Uganda, had experienced conflict and civil war, he said.

He called on churches to help put the brakes on destruction going on in Africa, warning that people on the continent were "not yet prepared to leave aside selfishness" and to "live in solidarity."

Chissano, whose own country was riven by almost 20 years of civil war, after independence in 1975, said churches needed to play a significant role in brokering peace between warring factions and helping reintegrate former combatants into society. The AACC's challenge was also to "promote dialogue between

religions and cultures" to address poverty, the spread of HIV/AIDS, illiteracy, crime, drugs and domestic violence, he added.

He said that the church had the capacity to mobilize communities at the grassroots, a great advantage. The churches are experienced in the provision of services such as education and health, which are crucial for development. So he invited churches to assist NEPAD in this respect. Chissano also underscored the close link between peace and development, saying one could not talk about development if there was no peace. "Wars undermine development policies," he observed.

Cameroon's prime minister, Peter Musonge, a Presbyterian, said his government and local churches were also "real partners" in areas of poverty alleviation, health, education and rural development. He told delegates, "the government greatly appreciates the fundamental role the churches play in the spiritual welfare of the citizens."

Other speakers who addressed participants under the overall theme of, "Come, let us rebuild" (Nehemiah 2:17-18), included the AACC president, Professor Kwesi A. Dickson, from Ghana; the AACC's new general secretary, the Rev. Mvume Dandala, from South Africa; the outgoing general secretary of the World Council of Churches, Dr Konrad Raiser from Germany; and the Rev. Samuel Kobia of Kenya, who will take up the position of WCC general secretary in January.



Dandala with Nyansako-ni-Nku

especially in resolving armed conflicts. The AACC is the church of all Africa, he said, urging churches and governments to work together for the good of all the people and churches and civil society to work together to hold governments accountable.

Established in 1963, the Nairobi-based All Africa

News

African churches wake up to HIV/AIDS, pledge more advocacy and care

Richard Nyberg

Yaounde, CAMEROON (ENI) – African church leaders meeting in the Cameroon capital have taken a hard look at their attempts to deal with the HIV/AIDS pandemic ravaging their continent – only to discover and admit that their efforts have fallen short.

But delegates to the 8th General Assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) have agreed to tackle the disease with full force, bringing the issues to the pulpit and acting more convincingly to break the stigma of HIV/AIDS.

Following hours of presentations by HIV-positive ministers and lay persons, delegates read out a statement at a candlelight ceremony on Wednesday in which they pledged to become a "community of compassion and healing, a safe place for all people living with

HIV/AIDS (PLWAs) to live openly and productively" with their status.

One in five adults across southern Africa is now living with HIV/AIDS, the highest rate since the beginning of the epidemic, reported the United Nations program to combat the disease, UNAIDS and the World Health Organization.

While infection rates across sub-Saharan Africa vary widely, the breadth of the epidemic indicates that HIV/AIDS now has a firm hold on most countries in the region, the report said.

The African church leaders plan to fan out across their nations with blunt information and advocacy campaigns to prevent even more Africans from becoming infected.

"All of us as part of the church have to apologize to our brothers

and sisters living with HIV/AIDS," Kenya's Anglican Archbishop Benjamin Nzimbi told delegates. He said it was the church leaders' duty to speak frankly to their congregations, and at schools, prisons and army barracks about HIV/AIDS. It was time to include HIV/AIDS in seminary curricula and ensure that churches set up departments to deal with the epidemic.

"We have to put the African woman at the centre of the fight," he said, adding that women are especially vulnerable and need protection.

Musa Dube of Botswana, who helps the World Council of Churches (WCC) provide ethical guidance on HIV/AIDS, said churches are finding that by itself, the basic "abstain, be faithful or use a condom" directive is not working. This is because the spread of the epidemic is closely

linked to poverty, human rights violations, violence, abuse of children, gender inequality, stigma and discrimination. The church, she said, must deal with these problems and listen carefully to people living with HIV/AIDS if it wishes to successfully address the issue.

Since the onset of the disease over 20 years ago, more than 20 million people are estimated to have died as a result, about three quarters of them in Africa, according to UNAIDS statistics.

Population Services International (PSI), a non-profit organization based in Washington DC, has launched a new initiative with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the Circle of African Women's Theologians to help curb the spread of HIV/AIDS on the continent.

Under AIDSMark, a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), faith-based organizations such as the African conference's member churches across the continent are

to deliver messages about prevention as well as provide spiritual and social support for those living with and affected by the virus.

"Your churches provide a significant portion of health care and social services in your home countries," Michael Magan, director of USAID's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives told the AACC's 8th General Assembly, meeting this week in Cameroon's capital, Yaounde.

"One of the great advantages that you have is that you are located in every corner of Africa, and this allows you to reach portions of the population that your local governments cannot," Magan said.

PSI operates projects in 70 countries aimed at health, family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention. It uses the technique of social marketing, the planning and implementation of programs designed to bring about social change using concepts from commercial marketing.

AACC General Secretary outlines church responsibilities

Val Pauquet

Yaounde, CAMEROON (AANA) – For the Christian community and the world, Africa must become more than a mere object of pity with a perpetual begging bowl in hand, the Rev Dr Mvume Dandala, General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), told the delegates at the 8th AACC General Assembly.

Stressing the need for unity within the ecumenical family of churches, he said that Africa should be seen as an investment for the future in a world that has abandoned values that the continent still cherishes.

If the Church is to show integrity and stand by its Christian convictions, said Dandala, then Africa needs a Church that is going to ask questions about the seriousness of Africa's nations, when it comes to living by the constitutive acts of the African Union (AU) as passed by African parliaments.

"This may mean speaking out to those in power in ways that will not always make us popular, but we have a responsibility to God and to the continent, to do so," he said.

Dandala recommended that the Church should give more attention to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a tool for eradicating the continent's dire poverty.

He suggested that adequate consultation be entered into with African groupings such as the academia, churches, and civil society in conceptualizing and developing NEPAD.

"Such consultations must be encouraged whilst not overlooking the fact that this initiative does point to an emerging leadership seeking to be responsive to the troubles of the continent, particularly Africa's weak economies and bad governance," he said.

He urged delegates to affirm the Peer Review Mechanism as a bold initiative to strengthen the resolve of African leadership to self-correct.

While engaging NEPAD, Dandala said that the Church needs to ensure that it examines the values and strategies employed to make sure that these will be accompanied by values and principles that the Church believes should guide proper stewardship of resource in the world.

"The demise of communism and its economic ideologies has left a dangerous situation where capitalism may easily be baptised as God's only way of stewarding resources. The Church must resist this temptation and constantly subject capitalism to the values of the Kingdom of Christ, where caring for and sharing with the weak, are the operative maxims," he stated.

Dandala requested the Assembly to mandate the AACC to help churches in Africa to focus on the following issues, if the Church is to be true to its prophetic witness in the world:

- * Africa's quest for peace and stability that will be fostered by good governance and effective continental co-operation.

- * Africa's need to overcome poverty that continues to cripple and dehumanise communities, particularly women in Africa.

- * Africa's struggle to free itself from killer diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS and its effects on the young.

- * Restore dignity to the disabled, which is their God-given right.

See related story page 10



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Editorial

Selecting the year's stories

Harry der Nederlanden

For the first issue of the new year, I thought we might do a "Year in review" like many of the mainline magazines. But what do you select: the big stories that made the headlines in the past year? Do you focus on Canadian stories?

Arguably the big stories of the year came late – the capture of Saddam Hussein, and, for Canadians, the departure of Jean Chretien and the inauguration at long last of Paul Martin. In terms of impact, however, are they really big stories? Will the capture of Saddam make a big difference to the stabilization of Iraq? Will the change in leadership of the Liberal party make a big difference to Canadians? Maybe they're not such big stories after all.

Certainly the resistance or terrorism that has arisen in Iraq as the Americans and British seek to help that country develop stability and a new, more democratic form of government has been in the news more than any other story. Although CC provided considerable space to the debate on the pros and cons of invading Iraq, we left the reporting on the course of post-war reconstruction to the secular press.

It was definitely a major story, but what would have constituted a uniquely Christian angle on it? That the post-war part of nation building proves more difficult than crushing Saddam's army should have been a surprise to no one. Maybe the way it was covered was newsworthy. That a great many reporters (and world leaders) often seemed to gloat over the difficulties of pacifying Iraq struck me as contemptible. After all, those suffering most are the Iraqis and the families of the American soldiers killed in the process, not George Bush.

There's a very small Christian community in Iraq. Should a Christian publication focus on the plight of our brothers and sisters in that country? Should our biggest concern be

that Iraq not become yet another country in which Islamic law becomes supreme and in which Christian minorities are harassed and persecuted? Then our sympathies should lean toward the Shiite minority that held power under Saddam, for they supported a secular rather than an Islamic state. These are the sorts of questions a Christian paper like CC asks itself every issue.

Perhaps, however, the events in Iraq will turn out to be less important historically than they now seem. Some, in fact, have said from the beginning that Iraq is a diversion – from the war on terror, from the war on third world poverty, from the war to save the planet from disaster. Take your pick.

Reporting global processes

Some of the really important stories are not events but slow, diffuse processes that don't often hit the headlines. Some church leaders, notably those in the World Council of Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Lutheran World Federation, are convinced that the multi-faceted process called globalization has been taken over by the powers and principalities of this world. While Luther saw the Antichrist at work in the Papacy, many of our mainline clerics see the Antichrist at work in the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.

This isn't out of the realm of possibility. Sometimes we assume that, as in the time of the Reformation, fundamental spiritual conflict always occurs on the level of belief and doctrine. But the front lines can shift. The battle between light and darkness occurs on many levels, but at one time the front lines may be in the political arena and another in the academy, yesterday it may have been in the natural sciences and today in the popular media.

It may be that the real spiritual battle today is a rather materialistic one, having to do with consumption, finance and trade. It is also possible that "globalization" – like "capitalism" – embraces so many different processes of such great complexity that it obscures understanding rather than illuminating it. Perhaps it is just a word to conjure with, a flag that divides people into opposing parties to wage futile battles.

Whatever the case, it does point to the fact that we are caught up in processes of change that are not only dramatic but that involve everyone on the planet. It also suggests that it is becoming increasingly hard to disentangle issues and problems one from another. They all seem to be interrelated.

Such huge, multi-level stories are much more difficult to report on. They require tying many things together. This involves many areas of expertise, theorizing and simplification. Before we know it, we are oversimplifying, drawing lines, choosing sides.

If the fundamental issues and problems are global, does this make national issues unimportant? Or does responsibility begin at home? How important, for example, is the merger of our two parties on the right? Without a viable alternative to the Liberals, hasn't Canada become a one-party democracy? Isn't that a contradiction in terms? Maybe this story is more important than we have been led to believe. But does the new party possess a genuine unity, a shared worldview, or is it a misbegotten freak?

Church news

Over the last few months, CC has devoted more space to the happenings in the Anglican community than to Canadian party politics. Why? Because the latter is adequately covered by the secular media? Because what happens in the realm of the church is more important to the

faith than what happens in politics? Surely, that isn't true.

Nevertheless, many Christian leaders feel that the drama played out in the Anglican community around the issue of homosexuality is one in which all churches are implicated. It puts us before a divide, they suggest, that is every bit as critical as the one posed at the Reformation. A church that elects to office a man who has left his wife to live in sin with another man has become a parody of church, a false church.

Ironically, some of the strongest support for this position comes from the very body that Luther and Calvin declared a false church at that earlier great divide. That makes us hesitate. We have become reluctant to declare others reprobate, damned. Is this a weakness in how we report stories? Are we becoming too even-handed, too compassionate? And do we therefore fail to provide clear direction?

A striking development over the past year is that mainline secular magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek*, *MacLean's* and *The Atlantic* have featured stories on religion, and on Christianity in particular. Even the resolutely secular *New York Times* discovered that evangelicals were not simply red-necks, right wingers and fundamentalists. *The Atlantic* got us all excited because it mentioned Calvin College as the center of the renewal of the Christian mind in North America. Along with the attention, however, came a focus on the heretic fringe of Christianity as though it represents where the real action is.

The Catholic Church did not fare so well over the past year. Despite the popularity of the present pope, the overwhelming focus was on the sexual abuse perpetrated on young boys by pedophile priests. At times the media made it sound as if the Catholic Church was overrun by them.

One of the big non-stories in the area of religion is the failure of moderate Muslims to correct and rein in the radicalism and violence of the Islamists. It seems that this sort of radicalism, which will tolerate no other faith expressions, is catching on among the Hindus in India and the Buddhists in Sri Lanka. When minorities are treated badly in Israel, it makes big news and draws condemnations from the UN. The same can hardly be said about the harassment, persecution and even murder of Christians all around the world. Reporting these stories alone makes the existence of alternate media like CC vital for our view of the church of Christ in the world.

I haven't even mentioned the realm of culture and popular media, but these are a handful of the questions a Christian paper has to face as it plans its issues. I'd like to say that at CC the decisions are always made on principle. Although principle plays an important role, practicalities do too. The writers available to us, the interests and expertise of the writers, the stories provided by news agencies, what is the hot issue, the responses of our readers, what is financially feasible – all such practical considerations play an important role in deciding what stories end up in these pages.

Nevertheless, we remain convinced that CC has played an important role in helping to expand and deepen the Christian mind of our readers and that it will continue to do so in the year ahead.

That can happen only as long as people like you continue to support those institutions that grow and nurture such minds and bring them to corporate and active expression.

Faulty and stumbling though it may be, CC plays a modest role among those kingdom institutions, but the Lord our God has promised that he will bless such efforts if done out of faithfulness to him who is the heart and soul of all our stories.

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Letters

Response to Vicky van Anandel

Working Women

I received a letter from a young woman in Holland in response to the last Building Trust column (CC, Nov. 17). She stated that the column on working women led to a very interesting dinner table discussion in her family. Her family still feels connected to Canada because they lived in Montreal for several years during the nineteen eighties. She was a small child at that time. They were members of the Christian Reformed Church in Dollard des Ormeaux.

Vicky van Anandel

These are her comments:

I also read the article you refer to: *No Ambition: Why Dutch women don't want to work* in the Dutch magazine *Elsevier*. My parents are subscribers of *Elsevier*. I was, just as you were, surprised by the very negative interpretation of the statistics concerning women and work. You must realize however, that *Elsevier* is a right-wing maga-

zine in a society which is starting to address social issues that were taboo for a very long time. I'm sure you have heard of Pim Fortuyn and the way he attacked the over-the-top political correctness of Dutch politics. Pim Fortuyn was a columnist for *Elsevier*.

It seems to me that the female author of the article wants to start a discussion on women and work by taking an extreme point of view. This is very common in the Dutch media at the moment. My own interpretation of the article is that it tries to address the common way of thinking that women are victims of a male corporate culture and lack of government services. And she might have a point. Though the victim-theory may very well be partly true in Holland and probably completely so in other countries and cultures, I believe that young, educated, Dutch women have the luxury of choice. And apparently they choose not to work. Whether you agree or not, is a different dis-

cussion. The question here is *why* they don't want to work.

I must also note that the article specifically states that it applies to ethnic Dutch women, as opposed to their neighbors and Dutch immigrants. During my travels this past year I realized that Dutch people tend to take their luxury for granted. From that perspective, the fact that two American women were appointed in the Board of Directors in Dutch companies says it all. As far as I can see, and this of course is an extreme oversimplification; the American way of thinking is centered around surviving, individuality and achievement, meaning, and working hard to achieve your own goals. Dutch people however, have always been able to fall back on excellent social security. They are not used to making sacrifices. They expect the government to make arrangements so they won't have to make sacrifices. However, the current government is now planning some major cut-backs and it

is making them very unpopular at the moment.

In short, I think the young, educated Dutch women the article refers to work less not because they don't want to, but because they don't *have* to. They are apparently not prepared to make the sacrifices in their family lives that come with a career because these sacrifices *don't measure up to the benefits*. And no matter how much society changes or how many child-care arrangements are made, pursuing a career will always involve sacrifices. And they will always be different for men and women.

Whether I will be prepared to make these sacrifices in future, I do not know. Probably not. And if some journalist will therefore call me lazy, let her do so. As long as I can say I've found a balance in business and personal life.

Janine Van Kampen

Janine lives in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands. She is completing her post-secondary education.

Correcting the misconceptions

Dear editor,

It is always a pleasure to read about the Christian Labour Association of Canada in the *Christian Courier*. But on this occasion I am writing to correct a misunderstanding that might arise out of Judy Cook's article "On being vs doing," in the November 17, 2003, issue of your newspaper.

Ms. Cook writes that the Christian Reformed Church "excelled in establishing ... organizations such as the Christian Labour Association of Canada." But the CLAC was not established by the CRC. When CLAC was founded in the 1950s, it did enjoy the support of many people who were members of the CRC here in Canada. But the CRC was not unanimous in its support of CLAC, and it was not officially involved in establishing CLAC.

CLAC did enjoy help and support at the time of its founding - from other trade unions. The Christian Labour Association in the United States was about twenty years old at the time, and able to offer help and advice to the fledgling CLAC. The CNV (the Christian trade union federation in the Netherlands), itself about fifty years old at the time, went so far as to send its international secretary, Frans Fuykschot, to be CLAC's first employee.

CLAC also enjoyed the moral and intellectual support of all kinds of people at the time of its founding. Many of them were recent Dutch immigrants, but quite a few were not. And not all were members of one or another kind of Reformed church. Of central importance, though: CLAC was founded by ordinary working folk who wanted to strive for justice in the workplace. From its very founding it has been a trade union, and not an arm of or front for any church.

When CLAC was first legally recognized as a trade union in Ontario, in 1963, it was because a court of law had found that CLAC does not discriminate on the grounds of religion against its members, or against the working people that are represented by means of its collective agreements. Today the more than 28,000 members of CLAC belong to as many different religious traditions as do Canadians in general. It has members who are Muslims, Catholics, Sikhs, Buddhists, evangelicals, and plain old-fashioned agnostics. Among its staff over the past fifty years you will indeed have found quite a few members of the Christian Reformed Church, as well as members of the Free Reformed Church, the Canadian Reformed Church, the United Reformed Church, the Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church in North America, several different stripes of Mennonite, Pentecostals, Lutherans, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, members of diverse independent churches, and probably several other brands of Christian that have not come to my attention.

CLAC is grateful for the support it has enjoyed and hopes to enjoy in the future from members of the Christian Reformed Church. But it was not established by the CRC or any other church, and it does not now have, or have ever had, a formal relationship with the CRC or any other church.

Sincerely, Gideon Strauss

Research & Education Director Christian Labour Association of Canada http://www.clac.ca/information/research_and_education/



Sketch by Hyatt Moore

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Letters/Opinion

CPJ remains true to its founding principles

Dear Harry,

We were disappointed to read what amounted to two editorials covering the Toronto 40th Anniversary Celebration of Citizens for Public Justice and the Public Justice Resource Centre (CC, November 3, 2002). Please allow us to respond.

You write about what you expected "ought" to happen at an anniversary celebration, and that you were disappointed. You are correct that our event was a "forward-looking meeting, projecting an agenda for the decade ahead." However, we feel that your own assumptions got in the way of fully understanding our intent for the evening. If you had contacted us at CPJ to ask us why we chose to celebrate our 40th anniversary as we did, it doubtless would have been helpful for you and us.

Our intent for this evening (one of eight we will be holding across Canada) was two-fold. First, to reaffirm our founding commitment and basic public justice approach, reflect on God's faithfulness and blessings on our work, and demonstrate the calling which a Christian-based political organization has to be a healing presence in our society. This we addressed through our multi-media presentation, in which we reflected on our founding vision and core policy perspectives, and then traced how CPJ has responded to various policy issues throughout the years. In the closing remarks Executive Director Harry Kits reminded us that CPJ and PJRC find their strength in God, who is the source of all public justice, and it is this faith that gives us a coherent framework in which to operate. We feel that we did indeed reflect on and renew the founding vision of the organization.

Our second intent was to give an opportunity for the CPJ and PJRC community to be challenged for the future. We did this by asking Carol Goar, one of Canada's prominent journalists, to speak to us about how she thought Canadians should be challenged to implement public justice principles on issues of public policy. We did not ask Carol to speak on behalf of CPJ — we asked her to challenge us from her perspective on the pressing public policy issues facing Canada today.

We appreciate Carol's message. Although she was reluctant to articulate it from an overtly

Christian perspective, it is clear from hearing and reading her speech that she is a passionate advocate for the common good. Carol reminded us that we live together in community with each other locally, nationally, and internationally. And, that if we are truly to be responsible citizens to each other we need to realize that our own security and well-being is also part of the security and well-being of our neighbors. She also affirmed our founding principles and congratulated our supporters for the insights and perspectives which CPJ and PJRC bring to Canadian public policy debates.

Our sense from the majority of those present was that we accomplished our goals. We had a range of supporters present, old and new, from different denominations, from different political stripes. Their comments on the evening were overwhelmingly positive.

We also take issue with your editorial remarks in both pieces on our speaker and on CPJ itself.

Calling Carol Goar "a shallow left-wing journalist" is frankly rude and disrespectful. Carol is a well-respected, award-winning, intelligent journalist. Those who heard her speech or read her columns regularly will recognize her thoughtful take on public policy, her sense of fairness and understanding of those she may disagree with, and her courage in calling a spade a spade across the political spectrum. We had the pleasure of meeting and communicating with Carol on a number of occasions before our 40th event and we discovered a person of faith, insight and compassion. It would have been quite fair for you to state that you disagreed with her and to take issue with specific policy areas which she addressed. To simply dismiss her as "shallow" and "left wing" is to construct a "straw person" that is easy to knock down, where none exists.

As well, we take issue with your editorializing comments about a perceived shift by CPJ on the political spectrum, and that CPJ shares many sympathies with the World Council of Churches and seeks to strengthen many of the programs of the welfare state. You seem to want to create a narrowly defined box through which to (unfairly) define us and then to be critical. We would be happy to address these issues more sub-

stantively, however, suffice it to say that a careful reading of CPJ's actual materials and policy statements provides much more nuance to our positions than you present. Specifically, we are not sure what you mean by our World Council of Churches' sympathies. And, while we do in part, argue for program improvements in the "welfare state", CPJ and PJRC have always said and continue to say that every part of society has a role to play in the well-being of its citizens, not just the government. This was reflected in the the multi-media presentation and Harry Kits' closing remarks. It is our working out of CPJ's deep desire to be faithful to the Biblical call to care for the poor and to love our neighbour as ourselves, in our social, economic and political lives.

In addition, you lament that many Christian organizations, and by inference Citizens for Public Justice and the Public Justice Resource Centre, are guilty of adopting the language of the world, thereby compromising their position and principles when pursuing their objectives. This is, as you are aware, a long-standing and ongoing debate within the Reformed community. The nature of the linkage between beliefs, theological articulation, social principles, actual policy, and the language used to express these is complex and nuanced. Many of the debates in *Christian Courier*, over many years, have revolved around some of these issues. You have taken one position. Others express it differently.

Finally, CPJ remains true to its basic founding principles and policy perspectives. CPJ attempts to apply them as practically as possible by calling government to its central tasks, and by encouraging the wide range of societal actors to play their appropriate role as well. CPJ is also open to the perspectives of those from other denominations and churches that are increasingly a part of the CPJ community. They strengthen our principles and perspectives as we together seek God's guidance in speaking to the public policy issues of today.

We ask that readers of the *Christian Courier* judge for themselves. They can find Carol Goar's speech on our website at www.cpj.ca. We also ask that you

Antonides' conviction unsettling

Dear Editor,

Harry Antonides seems to work from the World War Two scenario of the oppressive dictator and the liberators when he writes about the US invasion of Iraq. There is another part to this WW II scenario. Before the invasion of the Netherlands many Dutch people saw Germany as an ally. Many supported Hitler and his ideology. During the occupation some helped the invading German army subdue their fellow citizens. The Dutch government shipped 75% of their Jews to German concentration camps ("De Eeuw Van Mijn Vader," Geert Mak). On hindsight we are left to wonder how such an error in judgement came about.

When I read Harry Antonides'

articles, I ask myself if I am witnessing a similar phenomena as took place in pre-World War Two Holland. Some Dutch people welcomed the invasion. They hoped for good outcomes. Is Harry Antonides' faith and commitment to the U.S. similar to those who looked to Germany for help? I doubt that he would place himself with those Dutch citizens who looked to Germany as an ally. Yet I believe that he needs to be reminded of this dark part of Dutch history. His conviction and certainty I find unsettling because I believe that the fascination isn't with liberators but with resolute men who'll call out the army.

Jan de Bree
Duncan, BC

Origins of feminism earlier

Greetings,

In "On Working Women" Vicky Van Andel (CC, 17 November 2003) stated that during the 1960s frustrated women started the women's movement. That's somewhat simplistic and misleading. It was a new wave of the women's movement, a movement that can be dated back to the nineteenth century. In Canada, the first wave is usually dated around 1870; see, for instance, Alison Prentice et al, *Canadian Women. A History*, 1988. My own research on Methodist schools for females in Cobourg and Hamilton suggests that at least one of its roots can be found around the same time as the well-known 1848 Seneca Falls Declaration in the United States. Arguing on the basis of Scripture, young women clamored for equality, not for autonomy, as so many modern feminists do.

Also Tymen Hofman's article deserves a comment. He prefers returning to celebrating the Lord's Supper to four or six times per year. That's not exactly what Calvin had in mind. A question needs to be raised here: "Is the Lord's Supper holier than the Word?" Can we listen to the proclamation of the Word in a less holy state than in participation of the Lord's Supper? According to the *Heidelberg Catechism*, both word and sacrament are intended to focus our faith on Jesus' sacrifice on the cross (Lord's Day 25, no. 67). The catechism does not state that the sacrament is holier than the word. I know Hofman is not alone in his view, but tradition in this case does not represent sound biblical perspective.

Yours truly,
Bert den Boggende,
Brooks, AB

print Harry Kits' closing address along with this letter. Unfortunately, our multi-media presentation is not yet on our website. However, we welcome readers who would like to see it to join us at one of the remaining anniversary celebrations or to visit at our office in Toronto. We would be pleased to offer them a complimentary cup of fair-trade coffee as they watch the show.

We are deeply thankful for our many supporters and to God for blessing us these past forty years.

Our 40th event in Toronto, included praise and thankfulness to God and so we close with the refrain from the liturgy we worshiped with together at our 40th Anniversary Celebration: *Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven. Amen.*

Sincerely,
Judy Eising,
CPJ Chair of the Board
Harry J. Kits,
CPJ Executive Director

See Kits speech p. 16

Obituary

Carl F. H. Henry, leading evangelical thinker, dies at 90

Harry der Nederlanden [With files from Christianity Today online and other obituaries]

One of the most influential and respected evangelical thinkers in the world, Carl F. H. Henry died Sunday, December 7, at age 90. He was the founding editor of *Christianity Today*, which he served for over two decades. Under his guidance the magazine helped to give vigor and substance to evangelical reflection and to give it a sense of unity. For many thinking, Bible-believing Christians in North America Henry was for a time one of a handful of leaders who equipped them with the intellectual tools to take on the liberalism of the mainline denominations.

He was a man of prodigious energy, taking time not only to critique liberal and neo-orthodox theologians but also to interact with theologians and thinkers from the Reformed tradition, taking seriously the criticisms that evangelicalism – including the thought of Henry himself – was too much caught up in worldview that sundered soul-evangelism from social and cultural issues. Many of his writings strove to overcome that dualism.

Although born to nominally Christian parents who emigrated to the US from Germany just prior to WWI, Henry did not become a Christian until he was in his early 20's. He was well on his way toward a career as a journalist at the time, working as a stringer for the *New York Times*.

Seeing the need to deepen his understanding of the faith, however, he returned to school, enrolling at Wheaton College in

Wheaton, Illinois in 1935. After hearing a talk by Wheaton president J. Oliver Buswell, Henry concluded that "faith without reason is not worth much, and that reason is not an enemy but an ally of genuine faith, and moreover that the resurrection of Jesus is an historical event."

While at Wheaton, he not only taught typing and journalism, he at the same time pursued graduate studies at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary to become a pastor. After becoming a pastor, he continued his studies to earn a doctorate in theology. At Wheaton he also made friends with several people who would also become influential leaders in evangelical circles – Billy Graham, Harold Lindsell, Ken Taylor, and Richard Halverson.

He was a busy man. Even as he was serving as a pastor and/or teaching theology at Gordon Divinity School and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, he helped organize the National Association of Evangelicals, served as an editor for an evangelical magazine, and worked for a second doctorate at Boston University.

In 1947 Henry became the first dean of the new Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California (now held by Richard Mouw), the same year his first book was published: *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*. The book was well-received and raised wide discussion, in Reformed circles as well as among evangelicals, serving to bring the two closer together.

"Among my concerns," he wrote later, "was to engage



Carl F. H. Henry

evangelicals in a discussion of social and cultural problems and to help define authentic involvement."

Challenged by Billy Graham to give evangelicals a magazine to counter the influence of the liberal dominated Christian Century, Henry agreed to help found and to become the first editor of *Christianity Today*, a venture financed by Sun Oil magnate, J. Howard Pew. As editor of that magazine he became probably the most well-known spokesman for evangelicalism on this continent, and he provided a platform not only for critiquing liberalism and neo-orthodoxy but also to challenge the evangelical mind to take on social, political and cultural dimensions. He became more than a theologian, pushing evangelical reflection to develop a more rounded worldview.

Henry delighted in recounting a time when he sparred with theologian Karl Barth about the historicity of Jesus' resurrection. When Henry identified himself as editor of *Christianity Today* Barth asked teasingly, "Did you say Christianity Today or Christianity Yesterday?"

As the audience howled with laughter, Henry countered, "Yesterday, today, and forever."

After serving as *Christianity Today's* editor for over 20 years, citing long hours away from his family, Henry resigned as editor in 1968. Conflicts with Pew and other backers over editorial issues and criticism from the fundamentalist wing of evangelicalism also played a role in his decision to resign. He returned to teaching and writing, authoring numerous books, such as *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1947), *Christian Personal Ethics* (1957), *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics* (1964), *God, Revelation and Authority*, 6 vol-

umes (1976-1983), *Confession of a Theologian* (1986).

Henry also demonstrated his leadership of the neo-evangelical movement through his presidency of the Evangelical Theological Society (1967-70) and the American Theological Society (1979-80), as well as in helping to organize the Berlin (1966) and Lausanne (1974) World Conferences on Evangelism. He also served as lecturer-at-large for World Vision International.

Henry helped shape the vision of evangelical leaders such as Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship. He served on Prison Fellowship's board, as well as the boards of the Institute for Religion and Democracy and the Ethics and Public Policy Center, both in Washington, D.C.

An able encourager and champion of evangelicals serving in many facets of society, Henry critiqued evangelical accommodation to a society increasingly at odds with biblical standards. In an at-

tempt to unify evangelicalism, which he considered to be splintering over secondary issues, in 1989 Henry co-chaired a conference on Evangelical Affirmations.

He wrote, "I have two main convictions about the near-term future of American Christianity. One is that American evangelicals presently face their biggest opportunity since the Protestant Reformation, if not since the apostolic age. The other is that Americans are forfeiting that opportunity stage by stage, despite the fact that evangelical outcomes in the twentieth century depend upon decisions currently in the making."

On granting Henry the Mark O. Hatfield Leadership Award from the Christian Council of Colleges and Universities in 2000, Union University President David S. Dockery said, "Few people in the twentieth century have done more to articulate the importance of a coherent Christian world and life view than Carl F. H. Henry."

In the arrivals lounge

You were expecting
a mass departure –
all those gratingly optimistic evangelicals
hands flailing like palm trees
in a hurricane suddenly
dissolving upward into corpuscles
of red-white-n-blue light
raptured in a painless whoosh?

But instead here in Arrivals and
in airports all across the country
they touch down without warning
– flash of iridescent wing
– flickering arc of saber blade
a hissing landing cutting a fissure
horizontally through the curtain.
And they stroll gracefully into the lounge
without luggage of any kind,
beautifully and chastely naked
with skin as fresh as newborns,
for the great annunciation,
embracing us like long-lost relatives.

"Did you miss us?" they ask,
and in their wake, like the scent
of new-mown grass and lilies,
a fierce longing wafts into
the Arrivals lounge, and we
too are shocked into the Coming.

Harry der Nederlanden



Harold Ockenga, Billy Graham, and Charles E. Fuller were influential in the life of Carl Henry.

Church

Christians in Poso, Indonesia live in fear as Muslim extremists renew attacks

LOS ANGELES (Compass) — Fifty-eight-year-old Oranje Tadjodja, Treasurer of the Synod of the Protestant Church in Central Sulawesi (GKST), Indonesia, was found beaten to death on November 16, along with his nephew Yohannes Tadjodja, 26, whose throat was cut.

The brutal murders occurred during a spate of drive-by shootings and renewed attacks on villages and individuals, sparking fears of an impending crisis in the Poso region of Central Sulawesi.

The bodies of Oranje Tadjodja and his nephew were discovered by police just after midnight on November 16. Attackers evidently smashed the car windows, killed the occupants and then pushed the car off the road into the jungle, about 12 miles from Poso.

Tadjodja was on his way to preach at Pantangolemba, one of the villages attacked by armed extremists on October 12. He left Tentena with his nephew at around 3 p.m. that day. Police estimate the time of death at around 5 p.m. Due to extensive head injuries, the senior Tadjodja was recognizable only by his clothes.

"I believe the attackers did not shoot them or burn the car because they were too close to the neighboring villages of Puna and Tabalu, where there are police posts," reported Mona Saroinsong, coordinator of the Protestant Church Crisis Centre in North Sulawesi.

On the same Sunday, the body of Denis Lingbuliwa, a Christian from Wawopada village, was

found dumped at the back of the marketplace in Poso. Witnesses said Lingbuliwa was stopped by an angry mob on his way to Palu, dragged off his motorcycle and beaten to death.

The deaths were attributed to a violent mob that rampaged through Poso on November 16, threatening police, burning tires in the street and looking for Christians on whom to vent their anger.

The day before, police had arrested three men suspected of involvement in a series of violent attacks against Christians on October 12 that left nine people dead. Irwin Hamid, one of the suspects, was killed during the arrest. Police released Hamid's brother later that day, but he had been badly beaten while in custody, arousing the anger of Poso Muslims.

When word got out, a large group of Muslims gathered outside the Poso police station, shouting for the release of the other suspects and threatening further violence. This led to the deaths of Oranje Tadjodja, his nephew, and Denis Lingbuliwa on the following day.

In the past few weeks, residents of Christian villages in Poso and Tentena have reported the sound of gunshots in the forest at night. Many live in fear of imminent attacks by Muslim extremists.

According to Saroinsong, "Some villages in Poso coastal areas are now in trauma and afraid to do their daily activities. They are

not free to go to their plantations or rice fields. They have asked for guards, but the police and military don't have enough people to provide security."

Tentena, a town on the northern tip of Lake Poso, has a majority Christian population. Residents there demonstrated outside police headquarters on November 29, asking for police intervention to prevent further violence.

However, two more Christian villages were attacked that same afternoon. A band of 20 Muslim extremists entered the village of Kilotran about 7 p.m., shooting automatic weapons into the houses.

Two local residents, I Made Simson and his brother-in-law I Ketut Sarman, died from fatal injuries sustained in the attack. Several others suffered bullet wounds.

According to Ferdie Saerang of the Christian advocacy group "Poso Watch," most of the residents were in church at the time, or there would likely have been

more casualties.

The village of Tobomawo, 84 miles east of Poso, was attacked almost simultaneously by two men on motorcycles firing automatic weapons into the church during an evening service. Thirty-two-year-old Ruslam and 28-year-old Arifin were killed instantly. A 37-year-old woman named Moda was seriously wounded and is not expected to survive. Yulmin, 23, and Sandra Tengker, wife of the church's pastor, suffered non-fatal gunshot wounds.

Flyers circulating in Poso and surrounding villages in recent weeks call on the Muslims of Poso to close ranks to attack, evict or murder Christians. The flyers urge Muslims to specifically target Christians in positions of authority.

The government has sent an additional 3,400 police officers and military soldiers to Poso since the attacks on October 12. A report in the *Jakarta Post* on December 3 quoted Susilo Bambang

Yudhoyono, Coordinating Minister of Political and Security Affairs, as saying that tough measures were necessary because of the fragile situation in Poso.

Rev. Rinaldy Damanik, coordinator of the GKST Crisis Center and General Secretary of the Church Synod, who is serving a controversial sentence of three years in Palu prison, called for people outside Indonesia to petition their governments and pray for the people of Poso.

"There is no better way of helping us than by alerting the international powers of the situation here in Poso and asking them to bring pressure on the Indonesian government to establish and maintain a meaningful peace," Damanik said.

"Please do not give up praying for us. Especially as we draw near to Christmas, pray that the Christian community may be able to celebrate Christmas in peace," he added.

Christians are 'afraid and losing confidence' in Poso, Indonesia — An Interview with Dr. Edduwar Mangiri

A series of violent attacks in Poso, Central Sulawesi, over recent weeks has led to fears of an impending crisis in the region. Recently, Compass spoke with Dr. Edduwar Mangiri, director of the government health clinic in Tentena, about the current situation. Excerpts of Dr. Mangiri's remarks follow.

Compass: The GKST Synod (Synod of the Protestant Church in Central Sulawesi) met with government officials in Palu in November, asking them to declare a state of emergency in Poso. However, some Christians believe this would only make matters worse. They accuse Muin Pusadan, the district official or Bupati of Poso, of supporting the conflict.

Mangiri: The accusations against Pusadan are born of anger and frustration over several unsolved incidents in the recent past. The Bupati is responsible for the security of all communities within his jurisdiction, and both the military and the police work under his directives. But there is not one incident that can be directly and convincingly credited to Pusadan. The only thing that can be said is that the Bupati and the district governor have not provided adequately for security in Poso, particularly for the Christian members of the community.

Compass: What is the general feeling of Christians in Poso at this point in time?

Mangiri: Christians are afraid and losing confidence that the situation can be improved by the government any time soon.

Compass: Is there a sense of fear, or a need for retaliation against the Muslims?

Mangiri: People do feel this way, but the feelings are kept to themselves. The greatest fear is that one day, when they cannot be

contained anymore, there will be an explosion of anger, reflected in retaliation towards any Muslim. People hope the security forces and the government will handle the recent attacks, but the fear of escalating attacks is still there.

Compass: What is the general approach of Christians and churches towards the violence?

Mangiri: Pastors are encouraging their people to increase the amount and quality of prayers, as well as to demonstrate a righteous and holy way of life. Gambling and drinking are a big problem in Tentena now.

Compass: Do Christians see any solution to the violence, and if so, what is that solution?

Mangiri: They don't see the solution as being in their hands. It's in the hands of the military, the police and the government.

Compass: Do you know of any incidents where the Christian community has retaliated against Muslims?

Mangiri: So far there is no news about Christians retaliating towards the Muslims. There was



Painting by Hyatt Moore — Fishing Shack, Indonesia

Church



Damanik in his cell

an incident in the village of Kuku as a response to the killing of Oranje Tadjodja and his nephew Yohanes last month, when the locals stopped a bus from Palu en route to Bungku, a Muslim town, and searched everyone on the bus. One Muslim man ran into the darkness out of fear, but nobody was harmed.

Compass: What was the motive of those involved in the October 12 killing of Christians?

Mangiri: My best guess would be that whoever is masterminding these attacks is probably doing it to cause instability in the area, especially in light of the coming general election. I'd also say that their actions are a way of saying they do not want any Christians in Central Sulawesi — or the whole of Sulawesi for that matter.

Compass: We've seen reports that Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) has become much more active in Poso and Morowali over recent months. Do you believe JI are responsible for the recent attacks?

Mangiri: I think it is too soon to credit JI for the attacks. I've heard these reports from the head of police and others, but there is no solid evidence that JI are responsible. However, I have seen pamphlets put out by some local Islamic radical organizations calling on Muslims to join them and push Christians out of the province.

Compass: What makes Poso a significant target for Muslim extremists?

Mangiri: It is probably because, outside of North Sulawesi province, Central Sulawesi has the larg-

est Christian population in the whole island of Sulawesi. It has been the vision of radical Islam to make the whole of Indonesia free of Christianity. I believe Central Sulawesi is just one of their target areas in Indonesia.

Compass: What is happening among the displaced populations in Poso?

Mangiri: Around 9,000 refugees (about 2,000 families) are still living in Tentena and the surrounding areas. Only 4,000 or so have returned to their villages, with the government's assistance. The local administration and the central government have declared that the remaining refugees will soon be sent back to their respective villages, or relocated in new settlements before the general election in April 2004.

Compass: Apparently some villagers are afraid to go out to their fields after the recent attacks. Is this true for Muslims as well as Christians?

Mangiri: I don't know about the Muslims — but I never heard of any of them being attacked by Christians. This kind of fear has been with Christian farmers since the conflict began. Nothing is new, including the excuse that there aren't enough security forces to protect them.

Compass: We've also heard that Poso's central market, the largest in the area, is dominated by Muslims who discriminate against Christians. How does this affect the livelihood of Christian farmers?

Mangiri: It's true that there is not a single Christian doing business in either the Poso Central

Market or anywhere else within the town of Poso itself. But this is not to say there is no business activity at all between the two communities. The Muslim and Christian traders do their business outside Poso, usually in towns such as Kawua. Muslim fishermen sell their fish in exchange for Christian farmer's vegetables and so on.

Compass: Recently the Crisis Center in North Sulawesi (representing the Synod of Churches in North and Central Sulawesi) met with representatives from Poso and Morowali and came up with a written statement suggesting solutions to the conflict in Poso. What steps do you think the government should take to begin a peace process?

Mangiri: It's hard to answer your question, since this isn't the first time such a venture has been tried. We've seen so many disappointments in previous attempts, we can only hope and pray that this time around it will be different. I believe the government should be working harder to bring lasting peace to the region, especially guaranteeing the safety of Christians in accordance with the laws of Indonesia. If the government cannot address these issues, we should bring the matter to the attention of international bodies to bring pressure on the government.

Protestant activist survives assassination attempt in Vietnam

Ho Chi Minh City, VIETNAM (Compass) — Public Security police in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) attempted to assassinate the Rev. Nguyen Hong Quang on December 9 by staging a motorcycle "accident," according to the Vietnamese Mennonite Church in Saigon.

Rev. Quang is a leader of the Mennonite house churches in Vietnam and a bold activist for religious freedom and other human rights.

Earlier the same evening, Pastor Quang and another house church leader met with Jean Geran of the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, who was visiting from Washington, D.C., to discuss religious liberty abuses. As the two church leaders went to report to a colleague, the Rev. Tran Mai, the small motorbike on which

Pastor Quang was riding behind a colleague, Evangelist Pham Ngoc Thach, was deliberately rammed by a very large speeding motorcycle driven by a plainclothes policeman.

Pastor Quang — who has survived previous attacks on his life — and those close to him are convinced this was a clear attempt to "neutralize" him by "accident."

Miraculously the two men were not seriously injured. But immediately after the "accident," a number of police armed with rifles, handguns and electric cattle prods attacked both Quang and Thach. The police managed to subdue Evangelist Thach, but Pastor Quang escaped on foot and took refuge back in the house of the Rev. Mai. From there he phoned other house church leaders to alert them of the attack.

Church leaders blame anti-Christian campaign for Hindu election gains

Anto Akkara

New Delhi, INDIA (ENI) — Church leaders in India are blaming a campaign "targeting Christians" for the victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in elections for legislators on Monday, in the country's central Chattisgarh state.

The BJP, whose opponents claim it has a Hindu-nationalist agenda, unseated a Congress Party state government headed by Chief Minister Ajit Jogi, who is a member of the Church of North India (CNI).

The BJP clinched 50 seats in the 90-member state assembly, while Jogi's party could muster only 36 seats. Opinion polls in the run-up to the election had, however, indicated a victory for the Congress Party over the BJP, the main party in India's federal government.

"Christians have been used as whipping boys to bring the BJP into power here," said the Rev. Cyril Cornelius, director of the Christian Association for Radio and Audio Visual Services.

The BJP had pledged during the election campaign that it would ban religious conversions if it came to power charging that Christians are engaging in such activities to the detriment of Hindus.

Hindu groups sponsored advertisements, during the campaign, in several local daily newspapers that portrayed a bishop forcibly converting a "tribal person," as some indigenous people are labeled, while a henchman keeps watch on a cage holding other tribal people who are to be baptized on the orders of the Pope.

"As a result, conversion has again become the main issue," Cornelius told ENI.

The issue is particularly sensitive in Chattisgarh where more than 35 per cent of Chattisgarh's population of 20 million are tribal people. Christians account for only half-a-million people in the state and most of them are tribal people.

The Congress Party reportedly fared badly in areas with a predominant tribal population, where the leading BJP candidate Dilip Singh Judeo campaigned strongly against conversions.

Four Indian states went to the polls December 1, and the BJP won three of the four elections. The Congress Party was able to retain power only in the tiny state of Delhi, the Indian capital.

Evangelist Thach was taken into police custody for interrogation, where he was reportedly abused.

Pastor Quang returned home 11:30 that night and organized 16 Christians to go the police station for a sit-in, hunger strike and prayer vigil to demand the release of Evangelist Thach.

Meanwhile, police were arresting at least 15 other Christian workers in Saigon for handing out Christian literature to those attending Seagames 22 events in the city. The Rev. Tran Mai and the Rev. Le Quang Son of the Nazarene Church went out that evening, but did not return home or report to their families. They and Evangelist Thach were released about 24 hours later, near midnight on December 10.

News

Church leaders challenged to 'reconfigure' ecumenism in Africa

Richard Nyberg

Yaounde, CAMEROON (ENT) — Leaders of the World Council of Churches (WCC), the world's largest grouping of churches, have challenged African bishops, ministers and laypersons to embark on a large-scale rethinking of ecumenism on their continent as part of a worldwide drive for fresh ideas.

Faced with competition from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for increasingly scarce resources for social services and other ecumenical activities, national councils of churches have to find and capitalise on their unique mission at the local level, said the Rev. Konrad Raiser, WCC general secretary.

Addressing the 8th general assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Raiser said churches to date have largely fostered ecumenism at an institutional level instead of bringing inter-church awareness of justice and peace to the grass-roots.

"The organized ecumenical movement finds itself at a disadvantage over against the emerging networks and alliances of social movements and organizations in civil society, which have developed more flexible and effective forms of responding to globalization," said Raiser. "More and more of the classical areas of ecumenical witness and service are now being taken over by secular NGOs, thus creating a competitive situation in which the ecumenical organizations are at the losing end."

In struggling to "re-define the role of the ecumenical organizations in the present global context," he added, "the aim should be to rally the partners again

around a common sense of values and attitudes, and to sharpen the sense of a common mission." The main objective would be to "keep the ecumenical movement from disintegrating."

The Rev. Samuel Kobia from Kenya, who will take up the position of WCC general secretary in January when Raiser leaves office, offered an invitation for all African churches, including their women's and youth movements, to participate in this rethinking exercise.

"We've only just begun," said Kobia, noting that the AACC was on the right track by working with regional groupings of churches and reaching out to Pentecostal and evangelical Christians who have traditionally remained outside of the ecumenical camp.

The topic of ecumenical "reconfiguration" sparked a lively exchange among the hundreds of AACC delegates. Rev. Arnold Temple of Sierra Leone, executive secretary of the AACC's Theology and Interfaith Desk, suggested that the continent's Christians were "drifting into a post-ecumenical age," focusing increasingly on denominationalism and losing the enthusiasm experienced at the time of the AACC's foundation in 1963. Temple urged delegates to look back and recapture the spirit of evangelization and mission.

In response, Raiser said evangelization must include the "gospel of human dignity" and that unity, mission and service are all necessary components of ecumenism. Kobia added that the WCC's work "is founded principally on spirituality, and this is how it will be in the future."



Scene from the opening of the AACC Conference

Troubling emotions and a multi-million dollar project

*If you are afraid, help someone who lives in fear....
If you are sad and lonely, work for the homeless.
If you are struggling with despair, volunteer at a hospice.
Get your hands dirty with the emotion that troubles you.
This is one of the best ways to find hope in despair, to find connection in a shared grief and to discover the joy of working to create a less broken world.*

— M. Greenspan

What was to become a multi-million dollar project had its beginning as a painful concern expressed at a bible study group. They needed help with caring for an aging parent. They did not have many options, yet they wanted the best care possible. What were they going to do? Who would be able to offer what their parent needed? And what about the rest of the aging population? What would be available to them in the next decade?



And so, the conversations went — hour after hour, bible study after bible study. Finally, they formed a committee and had more meetings. At one point they joked they could recycle the minutes because they all sounded the same as they struggled to move towards a meaningful understanding of what was needed for their aging parents as well as the aging Christian community.

Ground-breaking ceremony

I enjoy attending groundbreaking ceremonies. A wide variety of people come together to celebrate the end of much planning and the beginning of much work. Usually a number of founding members are in attendance as well as community minded and supportive business people. Local and provincial political dignitaries also make a point of being present. Quite often a local newspaper has a re-

Getting Unstuck

Arlene Van Hove

porter and photographer covering the event. All of this gives the ceremony a festive atmosphere.

But I enjoy the speeches. Usually they are short and sweet, yet they give insight into the goings on 'behind the scenes.' A representative of the founders will talk about how it all began. A representative of various committees will talk about the struggles of trying to get the project off the ground. A representative (or several) of the politicians will talk about the importance of contributing to a thriving community

Generations working together

And so, as I sit there, I hear stories of how the concern of a second-generation immigrant family regarding the aging needs of their first-generation immigrant parents played a role in planning for this supportive living building. I hear stories of how first and second generation immigrant business people helped to make the plans a reality. I hear stories of individuals having very little spare time and signing on temporarily but staying a decade. And, I hear stories of how the first generation immigrants eventually had to trust those involved, not only by investing their money but also by selling their homes and buying the surrounding apartments and cottages. I marvel at their courage.

Hope, motivation and meaning

Besides having a natural curiosity about how some of these projects get off the ground I am now more aware why I enjoy attending these ceremonies. Still, it took Seamus O'Melinn, the executive director of the senior housing society, to put it into words. He had a simple speech about being happy and honored to be part of a hard working organization. But his words resonated with me when he stressed it is our faith and trust in God that allows us to be part of a caring community which brings hope, motivation and meaning to our lives!

That is why I am there. To hear about a way of caring for one another that challenges us to transcend our human frailties and experience the essence of our spirituality. In a world filled with pain and suffering — we need this kind of witness to the power of a loving God!

Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.



Family

Cardboard dreams: life in a cardboard box

Ron de Boer

I am standing in the basement workroom across from the fifteen-year-old's open bedroom door about to stomp flat a cardboard box for the recycle bin. The fifteen-year-old has invited the thirteen-year-old – an event in itself! – into her room to listen to CDs. A thin black cord connects their ears as they sit cross-legged on the floor, share head phones, and mouth the words to their favorite tune.

They could very well be five- and three-year-olds sitting there, and, foot in mid-air over the cardboard box, I am caught in a parent moment – that little mental home movie of the two of them when they shared a room flickering in my memory. Then, in what would prove to be one of those soft-headed, overly-nostalgic parent moves, I pick up the cardboard box, walk to the bedroom door, and offer it to the little tykes.

"Huh?" they say, turning down the music.

"You want to play with this box?" I repeat.

They glance at each other, raise their eyebrows – sharing some common telepathic teen language – and stick their headphones back into their ears, suddenly transformed back into the basketball jerseyed, eyebrow-plucked, pony-tailed teen queens they have become.

Not many years ago they would have jumped up and grabbed the box out of my hands, eyes full of wonder at the myriad of possibilities held by an empty cardboard box. It could be the public library in the miniature city they were constructing on the kitchen table. They would maneuver their scissors awkwardly through the thick cardboard so that doors flapped open and windows showed the yellow construction paper they had glued on the inside walls. Or they could punch a hole along the edge, draw a piece of yarn through the hole and drag their stuffed animals around the living room on a sleigh ride. Or they could cut out one side, staple Glad Cling Wrap across the front, and cardboard fish, cardboard shells, and a cardboard pirate would turn it into an aquarium.

Cardboard inventor Albert Jones would never have believed the cardboard he invented in New York in 1871 to ship goods would become a kid's best toy.

We once bought a new fridge, and when it arrived in a Sears cardboard box – the mother of all cardboard boxes – I asked the guy in the overalls if I could keep the box. He immediately looked at my wife, Karen, an expression on his face that said, "you want this thing in your house?"

"I'll recycle it by Wednesday," I promised.

"Okay, only if you recycle it by Wednesday," said Karen.

I half expected her to stand beside the Sears guy and say, "Your father and I expect we can trust you on that."

When the kids came home from school, I was already sitting in it.

I heard my wife say, "Go look for your father. He's hiding downstairs."



When they came into the room, I sprang out the top, Ron-in-the-box style. The five-year-old screamed; the nine-year-old squinted at me. Then they saw the box. Cue the ear-to-ear grins.

"Is this great or what?" I dove back inside the box. You could move the family room furniture into the thing; you could play hide-and-seek inside.

That fridge box alone was worth the price of the fridge. The kids turned it into a detective agency, a day care, a general store, and a library. They slept in it, played school in it with their neighbors, and invited their older sisters to dine in it.

More than a few Wednesdays passed before their interest waned and I lugged it to the curb for the recycling guys.

You can mark a lifetime with the changing function of a cardboard box.

When you're five, it's home to your favorite stuffed bear; when you're nine, it's a special agent kit used for spying missions in your neighborhood; when you're twelve, the red yarn from the spy kit is gone, and your box is filled with CDs; when you're sixteen, it's stacked full of photos of all your friends. For the first time you hide your cardboard box. When you're 21, your childhood friends are relegated to a shoe box somewhere under last decade's sweaters, and that box sits on your dorm room desk, a book case now, housing textbooks and your dictionary.

Then you graduate from university and you carry that cardboard box to your first apartment where you use it to store Kraft cheese and Captain Crunch. Then you get married and move into a house and you fill the cardboard box with all your favorite memories – old hockey cards, yearbooks, those teen photographs – and you store it in the crawl space where it will stay until you move to the new house and every house after that.

That cardboard box that carried around your stuffed bear won't be seen again until your house is being cleaned out by your children and grandchildren, and they will smile and

look through the box and wonder where that box has been over the years.

I remember helping a friend move his mother's belongings out of her apartment after she died. One of the boxes I carried was an old thick greasy affair full of musty books.

"That was once my toy-box," my friend said. "I can't believe she kept it all these years."

I asked my friend if he wanted to keep it, and to my surprise, he said no. It would give him no greater satisfaction than to crush it down and watch the recycle guys cart it off, he said.

Thus would begin his long process of dealing with his very difficult childhood.

So here I stand with a cardboard box in my hands across from the teen queen's bedroom. Suddenly the nine- and five-year-old pass by.

"Can I have that?" says the nine-year-old, pointing to the box.

They are now building a robot in the next room. I can hear the magic markers screeching up and down the cardboard. I hear one of them say the robot's head looks like me. Then I hear them say they need a bigger box for the body.

I, meanwhile, am in the crawl space. I have pulled out the old cardboard box where my university year-books have been sleeping for almost 20 years. There are also photo albums, broken trophies and a brown recorder I've saved since fifth grade.

Then a thought strikes me. Ten minutes later, I walk into the nine- and five-year-old's secret robot-making laboratory with my old cardboard box. "Can you use this?" I say.

So the box that once carried British lit anthologies and was, for a time, during our first year of marriage, a TV stand, was now the torso of a robot.

We have given it new life. We have broken the normal life cycle of a good cardboard box. If the cardboard box had a mind, it might have thought its life was over when it was retired to the crawl space.

But no one retires from life completely. Not boxes; not people.



Arts

Hyatt Moore: celebrating the colors of God's people

Sonya VanderVeen-Feddema

Seven years ago when Hyatt Moore, now 60, was employed as President of Wycliffe Bible Translators USA (WBT USA), he "sensed a strong urge to paint" and to take seriously the artistic gift God had given him.

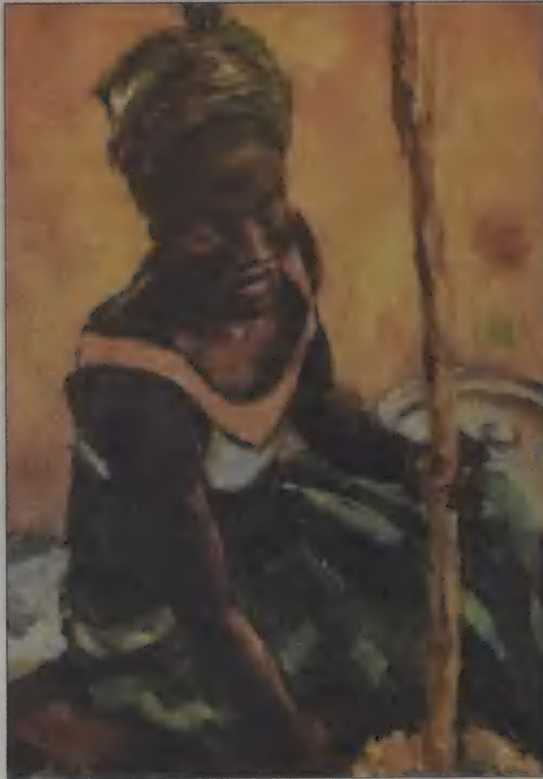
Moore recalls that, while waiting at a stoplight on his way from work to his home in Dana Point, a town along California's southern coast, he saw a painting in a lighted gallery window and realized that he was capable of being a painter, even though his skills needed to be developed.

Years earlier he had been employed as Art Director at Surfer Magazine, where he was responsible for the magazine's design and production. After Moore and his wife Anne joined WBT USA in 1972, he utilized his artistic skills in Guatemala by preparing publications for the agency. Several years later, when the Moores were transferred to the WBT home office in Huntington Beach, Calif., he headed up the design and production of WBT's new publication, *In Other Words*. To enhance his field experience, he was transferred with his family to Papua New Guinea for 2 years, where he served as a Media Services Director. From there he went to Dallas, Texas to serve as Vice President for Public Affairs at the international level.

Moore notes that by this time he had almost completely left behind him his graphic design occupation. However, as he traveled and sat in meetings, he began to draw again. "Just drawing, for its own sake, was new to me," he says, "a diversion during days-long meetings and retreats."

Undaunted by the fact that he was 53 years old and that he already had a full-time occupation as WBT's president, Moore told himself "that the artist whose work was featured in the gallery had started somewhere, had worked long and hard, and had arrived at being able to paint well." He was convinced that he could do the same.

Though his dream of becoming an artist was initially squeezed out by his crowded schedule, it reemerged after several months when he realized that he could tackle his new endeavor in bite-size pieces: painting



for an hour a day, practicing on a regular basis, and learning from library books when he didn't have time for classes. During that period he met several other men who enjoyed painting, and formed a weekly painting club called the Latent Painters. In a year they held an art show for their friends' amusement.

Arguing with self and God

When Moore completed his term as President of WBT USA and was between jobs, he began to earnestly seek God's direction on whether or not he should pursue his art. Wycliffe offered no positions for artists, nor did Moore know of any elsewhere. Also, he was keenly aware that his skills needed to be developed and that people who knew of his dream wondered at the wisdom of pursuing it.

"Those in the art field who saw my late start and my not particularly impressive talent politely warned me away from hoping to go anywhere with it," he says. "Friends who weren't in the art field wondered even more about this distraction from the things of God."

While visiting his oldest daughter in New York and helping her to discover her life direction, Moore used the time away from his regular activities to do the same for himself.

"Through a dynamic dialogue with God," he says, "I was led to a meditation on the parable of the talents. I had never been able to relate to the person with the most talents, and I had never respected the servant with only one talent and who had buried it. I figured I was somewhere in the middle. Yet, I wondered if I was acting like

the one talent person, hiding behind fear of taking my artistic talent seriously."

Moore recalls the conversation he had with God as he struggled with his uncertainty:

"But I don't have very much talent," Moore said.

The Lord countered, "I give seeds."

"But others were born with more than I had as a starting place."

Moore heard in reply, "What is that to you? Each one is different."

"But, it's only art," Moore said, meaning not linguistics or engineering or something practical.

Moore thought he heard God say, "I thought that was one of the good ones."

"But neither my culture nor my church culture esteems art very much," Moore asserted.

"So?" God replied, as if to say, "That's not my authorship."

Moore declared, "But it's late in life for me."

"Oh? How old was Moses?"

Moore protested that becoming a painter who would make a tangible contribution would take a great deal of work. In the final analysis, there were no guarantees that it would result in something useful to God or to himself.

"That's when I heard God say that there were indeed no guarantees, but that if I didn't develop my gift there was one guarantee: there would be nothing to use."

When Moore was finished arguing with God, he knew he had "no choice but to obey." He adds, "That was its own gift, not to be taken lightly."

Moving to Canada

Moore decided to accept a position that Wycliffe had offered him as Director of Development at CanIL, its training school on the campus of Trinity Western University near Langley, B.C. When the position was first offered to him, he had proposed to his prospective employers that he would spend one to two days a week on developing his artistic gifts. Moore was happy to receive their favorable response. He and his family moved to B.C.

Moore says, "It wasn't the occupation I most desired, but it's what I needed. I was too new to painting to offer myself solely as an artist. Nor was there any need in the world of Wycliffe for an oil painter."

In B.C. Moore took a few art classes when he could fit them into his schedule, studied other painters' works, and made over 500 paintings. He also discovered ways to use art to promote Wycliffe's development work. For example, to gather an audience to present the cause of erecting a building in which to train missionaries in, he and his wife Anne – an artist who makes etchings, linotypes, and monoprints – held an art show after sending out invitations and ensuring publicity in the local newspaper. The proceeds from paintings or other work that was sold went to support Wycliffe.



WHAT LANGUAGE WOULD HE USE TO SPEAK TO EACH OF THESE?

Arts



Painting people

From the start Moore felt led by God to paint people, especially ethnic people. He says, "That I made paintings of ethnic people corresponded well with what Wycliffe was all about – valuing and elevating these cultures."

Each year Wycliffe hosted a booth at Missions Fest in Vancouver. While his wife developed the event, Moore incorporated original art to promote the organization. One year when their 20-foot-wide booth needed to be artistically decorated, Moore was inspired to paint a large painting of Jesus with his disciples at the Last Supper. Instead of the disciples, though, he included tribal peoples.

"It was an idea that had crossed my mind once or twice earlier, but that I had dismissed," he explains. "It was a highly ambitious undertaking, but with prayers, intense energy, and gathering all the tools and experience I had, I completed it in time for the conference."

The painting made a deep impression on participants, who wanted to buy prints of it. Moore maintains that the painting, which he calls a gift from God, has become his most popular work.

"People saw in it a new vision, or a new way of understanding a vision the Word had predicted long ago – that people from every tongue, tribe, and nation would be part of the Lord's feast."

Not only were participants of Missions Fest impressed with the painting. Both the Vancouver Sun Newspaper and

CBC radio took note of it.

Moore continues to pursue his calling "to bring ethnic people to the attention of the rest of the world, not just as interesting subjects, but as people with real value, with real emotions and heart."

"I find them very worthy of painting – their color, their uniqueness and their dignity as people," he says.

According to Moore, paintings can sometimes make things important. "Portraits are made of important people, or people are made important by a portrait." He notes that ethnic people aren't conditioned to feel valued. Instead, the dominate

culture which they encounter continually conveys the message that they are undeserving of respect.

"But that's not how God sees it," Moore says. "They are created in His image and he loves them as they are." He hopes that his paintings will help the world remember the value of ethnic people and the fact that they are our neighbors. Since returning to

California in 2000, Moore has worked part time at The Seed Company, an affiliate of WBT USA which trains and funds nationals to do Scripture translation in their own languages. Meanwhile, he continues to develop as a painter.

Anyone interested in viewing or purchasing his art can visit his website at www.hyattmoore.com.

The Seed Company

Most of us will know something of the Wycliffe Bible translators, who have done an impressive share of the work in getting the Bible to peoples in their own language.

Fifty years ago, Wycliffe tells us, the work was seen as the work of the Western countries, but today with about 70 percent of Christians found outside the Western world, Wycliffe has organized in new ways to create partnerships between supporters from many different parts of the world.

They have done so through The Seed Company, which makes effective use of artwork and other visual aids to promote their mission. Their goal is to translate the Word of God into another 300 languages over the next 3 years.

Visit their excellent website at www.seedcompany.org or call 1-877-593-7333 to obtain a copy of SeedLinks explaining their latest projects.

In the Image of God: Faces and Souls that Reflect their Creator

Wycliffe Bible Translators have published a gorgeous picture book, *In the Image of God: Faces and Souls that Reflect their Creator*, which is comprised of almost 150 pages of rich, full-color reproductions of paintings and drawings by 52 members and friends of Wycliffe Bible Translators. The pictures are a visual celebration of the beauty and diversity of the people on whom God has stamped his image and whom he calls to reflect the beauty of his name. Most of the paintings in the volume are by Hyatt Moore.

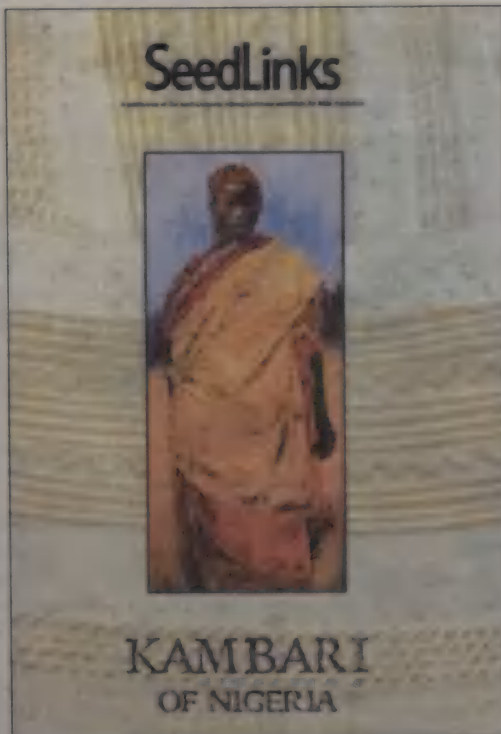
We have reproduced several of them in this issue of CC to join Wycliffe in their celebration of the peoples of the earth that God is gathering into his City.

They convey as no words can the wonderful diversity of peoples with whom Wycliffe's translators strive to share the good news that the One who created them in his image also wants to perfect it in them and to bring out all the color he has put into his creation.

The book jacket says: "This is a book about translation. God's love translated in a father's protective arms. God's patience translated in the lines of a grandmother's face. God's creativity translated in color, texture, form and daily life. Made in God's image, people of all cultures and languages reflect something of his likeness."

This book would make a marvelous gift for anyone interested in art or in missions, and at \$20 it is incredibly inexpensive.

Note: The pictures on this page were taken from the book.



History

Jonathan Edwards, preacher, theologian (1703-1758)

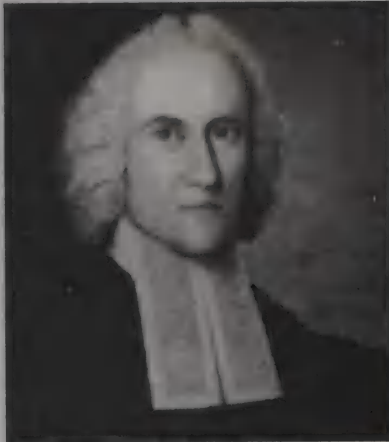
An American covenant with God?

James W. Skillen

Jonathan Edwards, America's greatest theologian, was born 300 years ago. New books on Edwards and the history of American Christianity are receiving the attention they deserve. U.S. News and World Report (12/8/03), among other magazines and media, has taken notice, particularly by calling attention to the growing impact of Evangelicals—Edwards' heirs—on American society and politics today. Yet it is a long way from Edwards to contemporary America.

New England Puritans of the 17th and 18th centuries saw "their whole society as standing in covenant with God," as Mark Noll explains in *America's God*. The Puritans, however, never resolved the question of how, on biblical grounds, a politically organized community should be related to God when all of its citizens are no longer members of the church. For at the outset, New England covenantalism conditioned citizenship on church membership.

The answer that most Evangelicals adopted between 1776 and the Civil War is the one that shapes much of American politics to this day. The first part of the answer — for eternal purposes — is to emphasize



Jonathan Edwards, (1703-1758)

personal conversion and heartfelt piety. Individuals "getting right with God" is more important than the maturation of the church as the visible community of God's people. The First and Second Great Awakenings, on through the Billy Graham crusades and the development of seeker-friendly megacomplexes today, testify to the intensity of the evangelical quest to save souls for eternal life. Yet this emphasis tends to diminish, if not ignore altogether, the meaning of the church as the community of the

new covenant in Christ, serving its Lord in all spheres of society, including the political community.

One reason why Evangelicals have taken this approach comes to light in the second part of their answer to the unresolved Puritan dilemma. Evangelicals, leading the way for many Americans, have transferred the seal of "God's covenant people" to the American nation as a whole. Or to say it another way, Evangelicals retained the Puritan idea of the "city on a hill" — God's new Israel — as the designation of America rather than of the church. Yet, if most Americans are not Christians and stand in need of conversion, how can the nation — the political community — be God's chosen people?

The truth is that "saved souls" cannot function in a vacuum on earth, and the nation has been adopted as the primary public community through which heavenly oriented American souls find their connection to God's work in real history. Evangelicals continue to organize private means and agencies to save souls for eternity. Yet none of these addresses the need for public community. The covenanted nation does that.

One who has had an evangelical conversion experience regularly recalls that moment as the occasion when God broke in to

change one's heart, to seal assurance of eternal life. In a similar way, the heirs of Edwards look back to the Puritan disembarkment in new England and to the Revolutionary War — now merged together in mythic memory — as the moment when God broke into history to make a new covenant with America and any who would become Americans or join America's cause.

For many if not most Evangelicals, America's covenant with God also now includes the obligation to protect the state of Israel at all costs, in fulfillment of prophecies to God's first covenant people. National politics becomes the means to ends known only by fathoming the hidden purposes of God. Meanwhile, the cause of public justice, domestically and internationally, and the health of the church, as a worldwide community of faith at work, both languish in America.

The Evangelical answer to the unresolved Puritan dilemma is, I fear, radically in error, owing more to the gnostic tradition than to biblical Christianity.

James Skillen is President of the Center for Public Justice in Washington, DC. This article was written for Capital Commentary, December 15, 2003, a publication of the Center for Public Justice.

An interview with George Marsden

On the 300th anniversary of his birth, Americans have been celebrating the great American theologian and preacher Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), perhaps the greatest Calvinist theologian this continent produced. University of Notre Dame history professor George M. Marsden, author of *Jonathan Edwards: a Life* (Yale University Press) was interviewed by Religion and Ethics Newsweekly. Marsden also taught history at Calvin College for several years.

We reprint the interview not only for what it reveals about Edwards but also for Marsden's observations about his impact on American spirituality.

Jonathan Edwards might be a helpful corrective to what American culture is like today, or a balance to some of the tendencies in the culture. He is interesting just in order to understand some of its religious dimensions. A lot of people are simply puzzled by the persistence of religion, so to add Edwards to the Founding Fathers — he's at least a spiritual founder — is a good balance to all the interest in people like Benjamin Franklin and John Adams and those kinds of founders. We need a little more on the religious side.

Our history and self-image are so upbeat that we have a tendency to say we can do anything. It seems to me there's something to be said for having histories that have at least a minor key in them. Edwards is one

of those people who say that humans are limited ... that we can't do everything we want to do. I saw last summer a church sign that said, "The last four letters in 'American' are 'I can.'" That struck me as a good example of how Benjamin Franklin's optimism has won, even in the churches — that with the right technique, we can make anything happen. Practicality has prevailed. Edwards would emphasize that humans are limited creatures and need to be dependent on God. That seems to me to be a worthwhile balance.

Tenuousness of life

Edwards had a sense of the tenuousness of life. He talks about how we're "walking on rotten canvas." In the 18th century that was easier to understand; lots of people lost most of their children. Cotton Mather, who lived just before Edwards, had 15 children, only two of whom lived to adulthood, and he went through three wives. When there was always that possibility that you or anybody else you knew might die at any time, there was a much greater sense of the need to depend on something else. Post-9/11 America has gained a little bit of that sense — that things aren't necessarily just upward and onward; that lots of things can go very wrong. Edwards's kind of theology is addressing the dimension of the human condition that consumer culture tends to ignore — that most people don't succeed, and

things do go wrong.

The only exception to the prevailing view that people can do anything they want is, I think, in the arts. Artists and literary people and filmmakers, like Martin Scorsese or Paul Schrader, have a sense of human limits. If you're writing an interesting novel, you have to have things that go wrong and people who do evil things. There's a host of films that deal with the darker side of the human condition. In films, we find that understandable. But we don't get a lot of sense of that in our public culture, where we're always affirming everything. There's a good side to that, but it also tends to be a bit unrealistic as far as our actual state of affairs. When we do political analysis of the American situation, there's a kind of constraint. You have to say everybody is basically good and work from there.

That seems to me to be a limited way to look at things. Edwards would argue with that. People have observed long before me that the one traditional Christian doctrine that's best illustrated and most empirically verified in the 20th century is the doctrine of the total depravity of humans — that everyone is corrupted. With all the terrible things that went on in the 20th century, which was supposed to be the culmination of the progress growing out of the Enlightenment, it makes one think there is another side to the story.

Edwards was a promoter of the revival.

One of the very significant things in understanding America is the persistence of evangelical religion. American religion wasn't dependent on the state, coming from the top down; it came from the bottom up. It had to be popular religion. Edwards was one of the first proponents of that. His whole view of history was one in which revival was at the center of what God is doing in the world. The evangelical movement, in a way, is an outgrowth of that outlook. That was also expressed by Edwards's contemporaries, like George Whitefield or John Wesley, who was also born in 1703. That's very important just for understanding evangelicalism.

God-centred theology

Also, Edwards has something to say to American evangelicals. They would benefit by having him among their spiritual founders. For one thing, it would be good to have more emphasis on a founder who was a profound thinker. There is a tendency toward anti-intellectualism in American popular religion. In some ways, that's its strength, because it's very easily shared and spread. But that also leads to some shallowness. Edwards has a very deep theological expression to propose to people. I think there would be a good basis for recovering some more depth in evangelical theology — particularly a tendency within evangelicalism (to which I am essentially

Continued on page 14...

History

Marsden interview

...continued from p.13

sympathetic) to make one's own religious experience the center of what the religion is about. It loses sight of God as the real center.

The most striking thing about Edwards's theology is its God-centeredness. He is always starting everything with reference to "What is God doing?" and then trying to understand us in that light. He has a very dynamic view of how God works in the world — that God is essentially love, which means that God is essentially an active being who is relating to creatures. The whole purpose of creation is to express God's love to creatures. Creation isn't simply something that went on long ago — that God wound up the universe and then it runs on abstract laws. Creation is an ongoing process. Edwards could go out in the fields and get a sense of the beauty of God's love in the beauties of nature; they are pointing toward the love of God, the redemptive work of God and Christ. He's constantly emphasizing that the essence of religious life is true affections directed toward God. Even in the Awakenings that he was dealing with in the 18th century, he was criticizing people who were celebrating their own experience too much, in a way that religion could get them to talking about themselves or what they get out of it. He was always referring them back to the centrality of God in all that they talked about.

Evangelicalism is a catch-all term for about a hundred different strands in American Christianity. Some of them are fairly close to Edwards theologically, although today they are not very well known. There are some preachers today who are explicitly Edwardsian and who have been quite successful — John Piper, who has a very large church in Minneapolis and has also written quite a few books on Edwards that have sold very well. He has a lay audience of people who find this kind of theology exhilarating; Edwards can be palatable to people. There's another pastor in New York City, Tim Keller, who has had great success preaching Edwards's kind of doctrine. This substantial theology appeals to some people who are looking for a little more depth than they're getting in the churches that are just a community church or church-growth kinds of places.

Flawed human nature

Edwards sees human nature as very complex; it has a dark side. He would warn against the folly of being so concerned about material things when life is very transitory. To say he's an expert in the American soul is to say he sees some of the dangers in the American condition.

It was a profound insight from Reinhold Niebuhr that our strengths are also our weaknesses. We are very good at "how-to" culture, material things, and the like. But those can become idols. What we see as evidence of our virtue, because we're so rich and powerful, people in the rest of the world see as evidence of our vice. Edwards makes us take a second look at ourselves and say, "Don't assume that these material achievements are the greatest thing you can do, or that they're going to last, because they won't."

Edwards had a fair number of flaws that he, being a good Calvinist, was very aware of. There's a kind of Catch-22 in Calvinism. If you do good, then you become worried about your pride in doing good. Edwards actually had quite a bit of pride. He talked about that; he was aware of it. He was involved in church controversies a lot and he tended not to back down on things. If someone criticized his views, he would drop everything and write a 200-page treatise to refute it. He could never let an argument rest. He was a very serious person. He knew he wasn't good at small talk, and he didn't do a lot of it. He didn't joke. He didn't think that it was appropriate to joke, because you would usually belittle people in some way or other. There have been other people in the Christian tradition who had a better balance of seeing humor in things as a way of dealing with human foibles.

Edwards tended to be a brittle sort of person, very intense. He was greatly loved by his family. He had 11 children and a very loving wife. Their family became somewhat legendary. He grew up the only boy with 10 sisters. He had very close personal relationships, but he wasn't particularly good at dealing with the public except in a public role, in the role of the pastor. He could do that, but he wasn't so good just at getting along with people or having much sense of how to deal with people who differed with him. He's like lots of

Making tracks

The other day I took Rocky, my collie pup, for his morning walk around the farm. It had snowed the night before. The sun glittered off of the fresh white blanket, as if God had strewn handfuls of tiny diamonds across the fields. Down by the creek the weeds and shrubs sparkled silver from the disappearing mist. Nothing disturbed the shimmering scene — no wind, no sounds, not even any footprints in the snow.

By the time we took our 4 o'clock walk (a tired dog is a good dog), the area by the creek revealed evidence of the day's activities. Rabbit tracks, deer tracks, tiny little mouse tracks and bird tracks intersected and twisted in and out of the cedar trees and along the water's edge. Then, of course, there were the footprints Rocky and I had left behind. The straight and purposeful strides of a 40-something biped along the perimeter of the field, and those of her canine associate, whose footprints dashed to and fro, back and forth in an unpredictable frenzy.

Back at my desk I browsed through a 2004 calendar, a gift from a good friend. I admired the beautiful pictures of horses for each month and then I considered all those empty, numbered squares, each one representing a day in the year ahead. It reminded me of the pristine fields earlier in the day — perfect, clean, unmarred by traffic of any sort.

I know that by the end of the year the calendar will be filled with all sorts of notations. I'll scrawl appointments, due dates, meetings, family gatherings, and myriad reminders on its now empty pages. As a family we'll celebrate birthdays, graduations, weddings, anniversaries. We'll plant field crops, raise chickens in well-ordered quota periods, and pay bills accordingly. We'll start every week with a Sunday of rest and worship. From time to time I'll sit and stare at the pictures of horses on my wall and wonder how the days could possibly pass so quickly.

For now, I gaze at the blank squares and dream that I'll somehow have more control of how they are lived out this coming year. I vow not to let busyness run me over like an unsuspecting pedestrian in rush hour. I plot how I'll stay ahead of those dreaded deadlines, like tax time and month's end. I'll visit my mom on a regular basis before she reminds me how long it's been. I promise myself to

people in those respects.

On the frontier

What was it like to live in the 1700s in North America, when the American Revolution was not on the horizon at all? The most striking thing in trying to understand Edwards in that light is to think about him at the intersection of British culture, French culture, and the Indians. They were all contending for more or less the same terri-

tory. Edwards's whole life was shaped by this rather intense struggle that's often breaking out into warfare among these groups. The precariousness of life in that era is also shaped by living in that kind of situation. Edwards's house was often fortified. He became a missionary to the Indians. He was in Stockbridge, Massachusetts on the frontier during the French and Indian wars. He was in a very dangerous situation with his whole

Intangible Things

Heidi VanDerSlikke

start assignments well ahead of time.

Maybe I'll get my columns into the CC office on their due date. Yeah...that's right...no more tyrannies of the urgent for me.

I'll get up early and work late every day but the Sabbath. My new and improved, ultra-organized lifestyle will enable me to finish loads of worthwhile tasks each and every day. On top of that I'll exercise, eat more fiber, spend hours in prayer and devotion and floss even when I don't have a dentist appointment coming up.

By the end of the year I'll be able to write a best-seller entitled "How to Take Control of Your Life." No. Wait. I'll come up with a better title than that because I'll be a far more creative person than I am now.

Of course the harsh reality here is that by January 2, if it takes that long, I'll be battling pretty much the same issues as I am now. All my grandiose notions of moving mountains will be obscured by the formidable molehills that make up my daily routine. On a good day I might see the bottom of the laundry hamper and balance the cheque book.

But still, there's something hopeful about that brand new year. Some of its days will hold incredible joys — visits with friends, long talks with my kids, motorbike rides with Jack. Other days will be difficult for one reason or another, or dull maybe, or just tiresome. Who knows which of those days might contain sickness, trouble or even death?

God knows. That's who.

That's where the hopeful part comes in. The future is no mystery to God. He isn't subject to constraints of time or space. His calendar is never cluttered. He harbors no regrets.

And whatever happens in the next 365 days — He's holding me close, blessing the footprints I leave behind and guarding the ones I make each day.

Happy New Year!

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family there. It was a very different era.

The biggest revelation about Edwards was to understand him particularly in relationship to the Indians — the Indian wars, on the one hand, and the Indian mission, on the other. That's a side of him that people hadn't really brought out, but it seems to me a very poignant part of his life and the development of New England. These

Continued page 15...

History

Interview

...continued from page 14

people came with ambition to convert the Indians, to live in friendship with them; in fact, they were at war with them often and displacing them, not converting them. That was an agonizing sort of thing.

Edwards was trying to respond to that with his own missionary work. He wrote a biography of David Maynard, a great missionary to the Indians. I think it was his best-selling book. It inspired lots of 19th-century missions. Maynard was very much of a loner who went out in the wilderness. I don't think he was especially skilled as a missionary, just very dedicated. He finally did have some success. People admired his dedication. It was very hard work in those days.

Church membership and conversion

Edwards died at age 54, and he started writing very substantial theological treatises, or outlining them, when he was already in his twenties. Actually, there's an amazing continuity in Edwards's thought, but he did change his thinking about church membership. That led to a disaster with his congregation. He had these amazing revivals in Northampton, Massachusetts, which was a town of maybe 1,200 or 1,500 people. Everybody was in the church, and almost everybody, he thought, was either converted or seeking conversion for a while. But then, after two major Awakenings, Edwards became discontented with the policy that had been set up by his very revered grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, that church membership would be based basically (as it is in lots of churches today) on profession of faith and being a good person. Edwards wanted a little more. He wanted people to be able to give some account of heartfelt dedication to God — something like a conversion; not an overnight kind of thing, but rather to talk about the heartfelt quality of their religion. Trying to change the basis of church membership — that offended a lot of people who felt they had a right to be in the church, and particularly had a right, for instance, to have their children or their grandchildren baptized. If church membership suddenly becomes very strict, then what happens if people aren't getting baptized? So Edwards's church sev-

ered their connection with him. He didn't back down at all. He knew he was going down with the ship and was going to take his family with him, but when he saw a principle, he would simply stick with it no matter what.

In his 18th-century language Edwards tends to speak with great precision in formulating his ideas, even in most of his sermons. Sometimes he has very vivid imagery — as in the famous sermon that said sinners are in the hands of an angry God. Someone said that Puritan sermons are like speaking something that's printed. It's a print culture; it's not an oral tradition, essentially, but it's a culture very much oriented toward the book. The preachers are speaking to people who are used to that kind of rhetoric. They can apparently follow rather elaborate sorts of arguments. John Piper has republished one of Edwards's more abstract theological works, a treatise on why God created the universe. That's sold very well among laypeople who are looking for some substantial theology. It's not a hard language to get into; it's just not catchy and easy, the way a lot of religious writing today is.

There are lots of practical things to retrieve from Edwards, because he's talking about the practical Christian life as well as more high-powered theological principles. Like a lot of 18th-century people, he's an expert on everything. His desk has all these little compartments for all the different topics that he was working on. A lot of 18th-century people tried to know everything, so it's a comprehensive system of knowledge. Edwards was writing everything from a popular missionary biography to an abstract treatise on freedom of the will; he was answering the Enlightenment. For theologians, the treatises are interesting, but there's enough that's practical to be found in the sermons. There's a book of Edwards's collected sermons that can be very edifying. There's a sermon series called "Charity and its Fruits" on 1 Corinthians 13: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels...." That's a very engaging set of sermons for the serious Christian.

Optimism and fragility

Edwards tends to emphasize the wrathful side of God more than perhaps I would. It was a great

mystery. The key to understanding Edwards is this high Protestant tradition that emphasizes the Bible alone as authority, and there in the Bible are these dimensions of God, and Edwards is saying, "How can we avoid this?" I don't think he is happy about it, but he's saying that given our premises, this is what we have to believe. It's a great mystery why God would permit evil. If the whole purpose of the universe is to express the love of God, why would God be wrathful and why would there be a hell? But Edwards sees this in Scripture.

Edwards believed that the millennium, the golden age, would come. He actually thought it would probably begin around the year 2000. After that time, just about everybody in the world would be converted, and the millennium would happen before Jesus returned. There would be a golden age in which the gospel would triumph, and everyone would see the truth. Then Edwards calculated that the world population was expanding in geometric proportion, so if you take that into account, in the last thousand years of history — in which there is a huge population — it would turn out that something like 98 percent of people who ever lived would be converted. Even though he has this very harsh doctrine that some people are going to be punished eternally and some people are chosen for heaven, as it turns out, the percentage of people who will be saved is far higher than normally would be taught in this kind of doctrine. It suggests to me that Edwards was extremely optimistic. He was also very uncomfortable with the implication that only a few people would be saved and most people would be lost. He's worried about the wrathful side of God, but he doesn't know how to get around it. Evil is present, and it's there both in experience and in Scripture, so what do you do?

In the 18th-century sensibility, the sense that everybody might die at any moment is extraordinarily strong. Edwards, with his strong theology, is constantly emphasizing to people: you have to be prepared. Don't get absorbed with these transitory things that aren't going to last, because you have to face eternity. Even in writing letters to his children, he will say: "We miss you, and we worry that

See Marsden interview page 18...

After the Buzzer

Tim Antonides



Pride in Regina

I've never been to Taylor Field in Regina. Actually, I've never been to Regina. But from early on in my sports-watching career, I've kept hearing the same thing: Saskatchewan Roughriders fans are fantastic. They're loyal, fanatical, and supportive. During the fall, they brave weather for a three-hour football game that a lot of people in Vancouver wouldn't face for a 30-second walk to the coffee shop.

For decades, Taylor Field (the team's home stadium) has been packed to the rafters with people who love the game and their team. When I see the Roughriders play on TV, there doesn't seem to be much that's fancy about the place. There are no huge scoreboards or deluxe corporate viewing boxes. There's football, played on a grass field and watched by fans who wouldn't want to be anywhere else. Maybe it's sort of the CFL equivalent of Green Bay Packers fans (minus the tacky arrogance).

As I write this, Vancouver is in the grip of Canucks fever. Some people who two years ago would have chosen a "Gilligan's Island" re-run over a hockey game are now driving through town with a Canucks flag on the antenna. Talk radio is bubbling with people's opinions on the team and where they're headed. The old bandwagon is being well ridden. Not that this is just a Vancouver phenomenon, by any means. In fact, Vancouver has always been a great hockey town (despite what some would like to think). The fact is, however, people like to associate with winners.

Let's get back to this Saskatchewan thing, though. Regina has something really amazing, I think — a group of fans who seem to just love football and who are grateful for their team. "Rider Pride" is more of a philosophy than a catchy phrase. An acquaintance of mine from Saskatoon says that the football spirit in Saskatchewan has nothing to do with media-generated hype and everything to do with grass-roots, down-to-earth appreciation for a great game.

I've been wanting to write about "Rider Pride" for a long time now, but I could never get my head around it. I haven't seen a game in Regina and I know very few Rider fans. I guess I still don't understand it all, but I'm amazed by it. I'm also jealous.

I can remember one year when there was excitement about the B.C. Lions and how it felt to be part of 60,000 delirious fans watching the Western Final at B.C. Place Stadium. But that was a flash in the pan. I (along with most of my provincial counterparts) have long since ignored the Lions. The Roughriders are a big part of their community and they're treated as such by their fans.

Before you roll your eyes completely out of your head, think about this: how many places do you know of where people completely support something despite its record of success? People are generally pretty good at turning their backs on something when it doesn't give immediate gratification. It takes staying power to stay.

All kinds of institutions have suffered from this human tendency. Our churches have been attacked from within, split, moved, or shut down because people wanted to see short-term success instead of offering long-term faithfulness. The same fate has affected workplaces, schools and sports teams.

We're all prone to wander and to follow the big lights. I, for one, will continue to sit in my warm seat at GM Place and watch the Bertuzzi/Naslund show. Deep down, though, I like to know that there's a place like Taylor Field in Regina.

Tim Antonides has returned to BC after a year of graduate work to teach and coach at Surrey Christian School



Christian Living



Celebrating 40 years of advocacy for justice

Speech given by Harry Kits, Executive Director of CPJ at the 40th anniversary dinner in Toronto.

.... For Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) and Public Justice Resource Centre (PJRC), our faith calls out beyond apathy or powerlessness. It calls us to a faith that opens us to our common humanity, our calling to love God by loving our neighbor also in our political life together. So together, we have donned the perspective of public justice.

It is a vision which helps us not to be lured into false dichotomies, or black and white positions when they are not necessary. We see the need for healing steps to be taken. Real people are suffering real hardships that concrete policies and prophetic vision can alleviate. That's the call of public justice, the calling from God for government, government which Romans 13 says is "for our good." Justice for all – the joining together of all circles of society for the well-being of all and for the common good.

Public Justice – that's the banner under which the Public Justice Resource Centre does research and education, distilling core values in policy discussions, animating emerging themes in public discourse, and creating documents that bring the light of faith to these values and current topics.

And public justice is the standard under which CPJ promotes particular policy alternatives, providing the way forward for public engagement, direct advocacy to decision-makers, political interventions. CPJ and PJRC – two approaches, two mandates, one perspective from which to go forward.

Challenging one another

So how does this two-part faith-based Christian organization address the challenges Carol has laid before us?

I know that some of those who have become our partners in various coalitions and initiatives have felt a bit uncomfortable about our being so up-front about the Christian vision which drives us. And that is understandable, because we all know examples of how faith-based public visions can be inappropriate, but also because at the same time we are part of a culture which tries to stifle any such expressions and often ridicules them.

So speaking out of faith is challenging. We continue to need to learn together how these expressions can best contribute to the common good.

In fact, people of faith often need to challenge each other about how specific political choices are consistent with their faith commitments. Christians need to challenge each other about how their shared faith commitment leads some to propose policies which cause suffering to other citizens and damage to the environment, and others to argue for a greater role for government in



In 1978, the theme of the annual meeting was "Our Political Task for Social Justice." Politicians Tommy Douglas and David MacDonald responded to a presentation by John Olthius.

the public good. Christians must do this just as Muslims need to challenge each other about the meaning of the Prophet's teachings for public life in Canada today and Jewish believers need to wrestle with the Torah and each other about how governments need to act today.

Of course, in the midst of bringing these deepest commitments out of the closet into public life, we must ensure that they are not used as fighting tools. Too often the temptation for people of faith, including those who hold to a secular faith, is to try to impose a sense of "just us" not "justice." We try to use the government to impose a particular religious point of view to the exclusion of others. In that way, faith commitments lose credibility and no longer enrich the common good.

Faith commitments – indeed all ways of understanding the world – must engage each other in the public square to help shape the common good. They need to influence the shaping of public values which can be the basis of policies contributing to the well-being of all and the integrity of creation. This open and respectful wrestling around core commitments needs to be the hallmark of democracy in a pluralistic country like Canada.

So CPJ and PJRC are unabashed about the Christian impetus that drives our work. It is something that shapes our vision, gives us coherence, and gives us a long-standing framework for addressing the multiplicity of policies we have addressed over the past 40 years. It allows us to continue to strive to meet our mission. It allows us to make a credible enough contribution to the com-

mon good so that we can continue to work with partners who may not share our specific religious vision, but who share our commitment to public justice and the common good.

Past and future

40 years ago, just as CPJ/PJRC began, Martin Luther King wrote a letter from the Birmingham jail. He said in that letter, that "We are called to be thermostats that transform and regulate the temperature of society, not thermometers that merely record or register the temperature of majority opinion..." I trust that we have been blessed to have played some small part in setting the temperature of Canada over the past 40 years.

A 40th anniversary is a significant time – a time which calls to mind both roots and change.

Looking back over those 40 years gives cause for celebration. We have worked through different political times, with an ever developing support community, and with an increasingly diverse group of co-workers. We have consistently sought new ways of understanding, of articulating, and of practicing the biblical call to advocate and do justice. We have sought new ways of expressing political love for our neighbours and the creation around us.

The core perspectives remain, but there are nuances which have been expressed differently over time, policy issues have come and gone – sometimes from the political agenda, sometimes just from our own agenda. There have been differences among us about the practical policies we advocate,

some more difficult than others. What we hope is that our common public justice vision holds us together to keep talking, to keep searching, and to keep seeking healing steps.

I celebrate the increasing diversity of our support community, staff and board, and look forward to that continuing and growing. Keeping our eye on the unity of vision for public justice, we can join hands together to speak in a wider voice, in different colours, and with different accents.

Carol Goar challenged us with a number of significant areas of work for the next 40 years.

It could seem overwhelming. But, on the other hand, will it be different than in the early 60's when a small group of people, many newly arrived immigrants, thought they could help make a contribution to Canada?

Paul Loeb in the book *Soul of a Citizen* argues that, "we don't have to be saints," but instead should be "good-enough activists" who "take one step at a time." In other words, we should not look on the heroes of social change, the media stars, the Prime Minister or Premier, as the only ones who can effect change. Stories abound about how people who took small steps, sometimes steps that built on the small steps of others, and sometimes over decades, were able to effect change.

May we each in our own place in life, and together through CPJ and PJRC take up the challenges suggested by Carol – including some of the doable ones she suggested – to advance public justice, to let justice flow for the next forty years.

We thank God for the blessing of all you – a loyal supporting community.

We continue to feel blessed by God who has sustained this organization in good times and bad times and has given it an opportunity to be a blessing in Canadian society.

We rely on your continued prayers, participation, challenges, and financial support as we go forward – past and future together.

Thank You!

Harry Kits has been Executive Director of Citizens for Public Justice and the Public Justice Resource Centre since 1988. www.cpj.ca www.publicjustice.ca Introductory remarks at the beginning were omitted.

Reflection

Running the good race – cross-country

One of the best-kept secrets of modern amateur sports is cross-country running. I'd never heard of it until we came to Muskegon in 1968 and then it didn't draw enough of my interest to go to watch it even once though I always went to the high school basketball games. But having broken into the 21st Century, I've discovered the ultimate in running.

But it has been around for a while. Early in October we went to watch a meet at Riverside Park in Grand Rapids. As I walked from a parking place to the starting area, struggling for air and looking for a place to rest, I spied a picnic table with an open space at one end. I noticed an old man sitting on the other end of the seat who chided me for not getting into the race. Very funny! But we struck up a conversation.

Like me, he had a grandchild in the race. He was wearing the green of West Catholic High School. He told me he had coached Cross-Country when his daughter used to run. A granddaughter was also a fine athlete. She had won the top medal in a State of Michigan competition and had her victory ring made into the size that would fit her Grandpa. He showed it off proudly.

In talking about running, I told him the only place I'd ever tried to run was around the bases on the softball diamond. He recalled his speed in running away from his "old man!"

We did digress a bit to talk about how the kids aren't getting the discipline we got too much of in our time. Kids now have their parents on the run. This old Catholic and I had a good time as we rested our bones on that picnic table. He did have a bit more flesh on his sturdy frame than I have, but there was an easy rapport built up between historic enemies on that bright and beautiful day in Grand Rapids.

But to get to the races. The race calls for seven runners from each school to stand behind the starting line and at the crack of the pistol to break for the clearing, with 50 to 100 starters all vying for the lead. The race path is marked with a chalk-line leading over hill and dale for five kilometers. The line brings the racers into view of their supporters at several points easily accessed by those with good legs. And those supporters yell encouragement as their runners approach in a very thinned-out line, all the way from "leaders to stragglers."

And there is a great crowd. The yelling is emotionally charged: "Sarah! Go. Sarah! Great, Sarah! Keep it up, Sarah!" She's already straining every well-trained muscle.

"Yeah Carrie, You're doing great. Take it to 'em!"

Already it's becoming clear which team is likely to win. Our girls have five great runners, with one usually out in front just a few seconds and four in a close pack behind her. They've trained together so long that the four sometimes finish all in a row.



PHOTO TAKEN FROM CALVIN SPARK, SPRING 2001

Every meet will likely have one outstanding runner, maybe from a losing team, who sets the pace — the rabbit for the rest of the pack.

The finish line is near the starting gate. The crowd forms on both sides of the line for the last 100 meters. It roars its approval and cheers as each runner passes before it. "Nice job! Great race! You did it!" The time keepers command the finish line and the officials check the girls in order of their finish, and the runners, having given every last ounce of effort in their final sprint, break their pace and enjoy regaining their breath. A few over-do it and collapse as they come in. But they soon rise to join their team-

mates and find out how they finished.

By now my Catholic friend and I had long lost each other in the crowd. And at that point he and I were on different sides, but not "enemies." In cross-country their are no enemies, and no shenanigans, and the crowd is always joyous and friendly, whether winners or losers. But West Catholic took a beating, as did every other school in the race, for the Black Pack Eagles finished with a near perfect score. With this they are Grand Rapids City Champions, again!

To determine the score, the positions in which the first five team-members finish their race is totaled. The first runner in earns her team a credit of 1 point and the second gains 2 points etc. Add them all up and the team with the lowest score wins.

Each girl's time is also important, for by it they judge their improvement each week. Their city-championship scores were: Debbie Speyer (2) at 19:29; Carrie Hoogland (3) at 19:35; Sarah Hofman (4) at 19:39; Jessica Jager (5) at 19:47; and Jessie Koster (8) at 20:07. Our girls scored a 22 that day. (A perfect score is 15.) No other team was even close.

Then the Black Pack entered the State competitions where only the best qualify. The regional meet was held on a beautiful sunny October 25th, where they finished second with 44 points and qualified for the State finals. There the mass of runners numbered over 200, all behind one long line.

The competition was no tougher than at the regional for the Pack came in second with 119 points, again looking at the heels of the regional victors.

But the drama didn't end at the finish line. The awards ceremony included not only the medals for the winning teams, but also the naming of the top 30 runners to receive All State medals. It was every girl's dream to make the top 30. Sarah was hoping against hope that she had made the cut-off but she had qualms. In the last 40 meters, preparing for her final sprint, she veered left not to get in the way of a team-mate to her right, when the runner right ahead of her veered in front of her, forcing her to change direction again. She felt valuable time slip past. When the scores were released she was No. 31, at 19.081, one-tenth of a second behind No. 30.

She was heart-broken and collapsed in tears. Only that runner knows whether the move forcing Sarah's delay was deliberate. She came in at No. 29.

The Black Pack are fine and devout young ladies. They could often be seen huddled together on the grass, praying, or just supporting each other. There was with them no goal for personal glory — the team, the Pack, was the important thing. They used this most "edifying" sport to build the kind of Christian character into their lives that will long out-live their strength to run the 5 k.

Ty Hofman is a Yankee-Canuck and retired minister of the Christian Reformed Church, living in Grand Rapids, Mich.



Marsden interview

...continued from p. 15

you could die any moment. Think about the state of your soul."

There's one case where his son, Jonathan Edwards Jr., who is 10 years old, is off with a missionary to the Indians in northern Pennsylvania during the war. Edwards is writing to him and saying: "You might die; care for your soul." He's thinking of eternity all the time. There's this emphasis on being ready to die. Within about a one-year span, his son-in-law Aaron Burr Sr. dies. Then Edwards dies. Then his daughter, Esther Burr, dies. Then his wife Sarah dies. A lot of the major characters, within a 12-month period, all die. We tend to live with the illusion that we're going to live forever. Of course, we do live longer than people then did, but we don't face the reality that life is limited. I think you can learn from 18th-

century people. With the precariousness of the world today, things can go very wrong. It's good to be reminded that we're not here forever, and one ought to face that.

Edwards didn't like elaborate, expensive funerals. There's no order of service from his own funeral. I imagine it was quite simple. Funeral sermons were a common thing, but I don't even know who preached his.

I wouldn't think Edwards is more than ordinarily fearful, but his theology emphasizes that life is profoundly important and that you're playing for high stakes — that eternity is at stake. That does invite some fearfulness, but it is also the occasion for great emphasis on God's mercy. You need to be brought to an extreme situation to see that you can't depend simply on yourself; you do need God. That whole psychologi-

cal experience is one that does intensify the meaning of life. It was something that made life, even for very ordinary people, part of a larger drama. This is *Pilgrim's Progress*, and we might get off the road and be destroyed, or never get out of Vanity Fair, or the like. That life is a great drama, I think, is one of the appeals of the whole Puritan-Calvinist way of thinking.

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Opinion

Mainly on Money

Consumer debt, national liability

A few weeks ago, when I was in Los Angeles, the *New York Times* had an extra 24 page insert, dealing exclusively with the *Outlook for the Economy & Business*. I can capture the entire forecast in one word, "Spend."

Only when consumers keep on buying stuff they don't need with money they don't have, can our economy survive. Nothing props up the economy more than consumers: if they stop saying "Charge it" we are sunk. Nothing frightens forecasters more than frugality, thrift, saving for the rainy day, being careful, making do. The only thing that will ensure a booming economy is Americans to get out the wallet, and splurge.

Says the lead article, "Consumers will keep spending anyway, going deeper into debt to do so if they must.... So, as the typical household keeps on spending, and as other sectors of the economy revive, the country will prosper. There is considerable optimism on this point among the nations forecasters."

Isn't that interesting? Forecasters are optimistic. When aren't they? They lose their lucrative jobs when they are down on the economy. They are like politicians who too are afraid to sound negative for fear that their words will become self-fulfilling.

Take last week: then these same crystal ball gazers had predicted that the USA would generate 150,000 new jobs in November. The hard truth was that only 57,000 were realized. So don't give too much credence to these prophets.

That society has changed, is no secret. In 1949, 70 percent of our income went for the necessities: food, shelter clothing, we now need less than 46 percent to provide life's essentials. What went up was medical care. Before World War II less than \$50.00 of each \$1,000 was spent in the healing business – less than 5 percent. Now this figure is \$190.00 or 19 percent.

Is that progress? I know that people live longer, but has quality of life increased? Do they live better?

Today the work force face many more uncertainties: its pace is more hectic, its outlook more uncertain: much more a matter of 'adapt or die.' No wonder depression has reached epidemic proportions and we all fear cancer.

The most drastic change is that to survive we need two incomes. Where before 1940 very few women were employed – often quitting when wedding bells rang – today the economy would collapse if women left their jobs en masse. There must be a relationship between this and the divorce rate. Now 43 percent of marriages fail. Before the war split-ups were rare.

There is good news: the use of alcohol and tobacco has decreased while outlays for education and donations have climbed. The bad trend is gambling: last year, for the first time ever, Americans lost more money in casinos and on-line betting than they spent

on books, magazines and newspapers combined.

The most dangerous development is debt. While wages have stagnated, spending has not. The extra money has come from borrowing. Low interest rates have inflated house values, which have allowed homeowners to borrow against their rising equity through mortgage refinancing. Starter homes – Starter homes! – in Boston, in ZIP codes with a median income of \$40,000 (US) the average value has increased from \$801,081 in 2002 to \$972,530 in 2003, a jump of 21.4 %. In New York, based on the same data, during that same period, they went from \$868,921 to \$1,040,514, 19.7% more. At the same time rents have dropped, because everybody that possibly could buy, has bought, and vacancy rates are up, a double whammy for landlords, who suddenly see their building values collapse.

Office buildings too have gone the same downward way. Can a drop of house values be far behind? If that happens we are in a real mess. Even a small increase in the interest rate of one percent will throw the economy off. With an 8 trillion debt (that's an 8 with 12 zeros, or 8 million million) a one percent increase will cost the consumer \$80 billion, or for the 70 million debt-laden American households, close to \$1,200 per year.

With the US dollar dropping and the Euro and the Looney rising, we might see Canadian interest rates go down, and US rates go up, also because of its budget and trade deficits. Combine this with a national debt of \$7 trillion or \$100,000 per household and we have a recipe for disaster. The Bush-men pray that this fool's paradise will not collapse before November 2004 when their mandate is up for grabs.

I saw a scary table in the *Economist*, where we in Canada of all nations, have the highest future burden for our social benefits, our Universal Health coverage and our pension provisions. According to this graph, there is no other country in the Western World with larger liabilities. Not a good prospect for us and for the new Martin team.

In my Life Insurance days, when I studied for CLU, I learned that pension pay-out depends on two factors: life expectancy and interest rates. We keep on living longer. That's good for us, but bad for the public purse. Today, if you take reasonable care of your self, no smoking or excess alcohol use, a bit of exercise and not too much meat but lots of fruit and veggies, middle age ends at 70. And once we reach that age, we can expect to live at least another 15 years.

Today's pensions were not designed with such a long life in mind. If only interest rates were high: this would help to boost our retirement saving accounts, but they are at an all-time low – even negative in some countries such as Japan.

So a double blow to the Canadian Treasury, committed to pay us, in various schemes, a monthly sum until we die. Longer life combined with low or negative interest threaten this worthy venture.

When von Bismarck, the mighty German Chancellor, instituted the first old-age state-provided pension in 1891, to start at age 65, the average length of life was also 65, so not a great deal of tax money was needed to make this possible. The equivalent today would see pensions start of age 80 or so.

Want an example of the 'welfare' we older people, even those who are well-off, receive from our generous rulers? Take my own experience. I paid CPP from the very start. As a self-employed person my first annual contribution was \$150.00, my last in 1993 \$1,500.00. In those 17 years or so, I paid in a total of \$15,000. In order to reflect the earned interest, I added 8 percent compound to these annual payments, which increased my pension pot to \$32,000. Believe it or not, I used up that entire amount in 4 short years. Statistically at age 65 I have a life expectancy of 84 years, so that for an average of 15 years – from age 69 till I am 84 – I will receive \$8,000 per year for which I have not contributed anything: a total of \$120,000. Pure welfare.

No wonder that, according to the Canadian Institute of Actuaries, people over 65 – an increasing segment of society, by the way – receive for every one dollar they contribute in income tax, six dollars back from Ottawa in the form of Old Age Security, Canada Pension Plan, Guaranteed Income Supplements and Medicare. With the senior class expanding at an alarming rate, we older pampered women and men are stealing the future of the next generation.

Another anomaly is that a thirty-year-old married with one child, pays some 60 percent more income tax than a senior earning the same amount. Ridiculous actually.

And that is not all. I benefitted even more: all our five children received univer-

sity educations, with several obtaining post-graduate degrees. With low tuition then, and good job prospects later, our 'liberal' government has paid at least \$300,000 on my behalf. Now with high university costs and large loans, and diminished work opportunities, today's young people must not only pay back what they had to borrow but also provide all the perks we seniors enjoy. With a much lower birthrate, fewer and fewer workers are available to do this, increasing their burden even more.

The only way we can defuse the time bomb that threatens all Western economies, including that of Japan, is to increase both the birth rate and immigration.

France with a 35-hour work week provides a better work-life balance for parents and with a strong financial incentive to have a third child, now has Europe's highest birth-rate. It seems that a short work-week, extra cash and full-time childcare outside the home puts couples in the making-babies mood. How about it.

That the West is facing an economic trap is a fact. We in Canada are the most vulnerable, offering the best of all worlds for now, relieving seniors from financial hardship, which, in turn, help people live longer (because worry kills) which in turn cost the State more money, which, in turn, will increase the burden of the next generation. Our country is in a classic debt spiral which Ottawa will have to reverse sooner rather than later.

Expect Paul Martin, after the election next spring, to tackle this unpopular problem, the most pressing financial issue he shares with all modern nations.

Bert Hielema had a cyst removed from his kidney and was amazed how laser surgery did minimal damage and made a quick recovery possible.



News/Business Directory/Advertising

Self-discovery of imprisoned persons

20 year anniversary

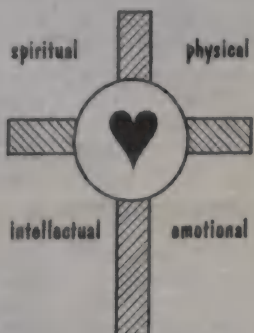
(News release)— Twenty years ago, in 1984, the Lord used a short dream to redirect Casey Vander Stelt away from his well-established construction business to share the Good News of hope, healing, forgiveness and restoration with imprisoned persons.

Within two weeks, he started doing this work part-time, and it soon became a full-time undertaking.

In 1987, the Ministry received corporate status from the Province of Ontario under the name Self-Discovery of Imprisoned Persons and was granted charitable donation status.

During the past 20 years, Casey made over 7,600 inmate visits in 31 provincial and federal institutions. He has tried to help the imprisoned realise the value and need for God's healing and restoring grace for the whole person, i.e. physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual.

On numerous occasions, Casey has been called upon by correctional officers, social workers, volunteer co-ordinators and chaplains to meet with the most troubled and desperate inmates, often with very positive outcomes. For example during the past 20 years, he was instrumental in preventing six inmate murders and in weaning many inmates back from the brink of suicide.



A smaller portion of Casey's time is spent in the community across Ontario where, during 40 years, he has also helped many troubled persons.

Casey is deeply grateful to S.I.P.'s past and present directors, in particular Dr. Robert Bernhardt, S.I.P.'s first five-year president. The seven present directors have been with S.I.P. for a combined total of 88 years, most of them since incorporation in 1987: Emma Winter, Gerald Vander Witlick, Rev. Homer Samplonius, Gary Postma, Dave Rupke, Bill Boonstra, and John Van Groningen. Casey appreciates not only their time served, but also their input, encouragements and prayerful and financial support.

In addition, our thanks are extended to many individual donors and businesses, as well as a number of congregations representing four different denominations. And a very special thank-you to one widow who, in direct donations and goods and services, contributed a very substantial amount during the last 20 years.

Casey is now just 74 years young. And, like his Savior, he has no intentions to ever retire from sharing the Good News unless physically forced to do so.

Over the years, he has been working on the story of his life and hopes to have it in print in the foreseeable future.

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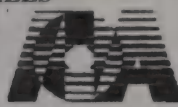
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<div data-bbox="61 1619 360 2007" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Sketch by Hyatt Moore</p>	<p>Job Opportunity</p> <p>HELP WANTED – INVENTORY CONTROL</p> <p>Wholesale nursery, looking for inventory control person for one year position (maternity leave) with possibility of other full time work. Applicant must have excellent computer skills, especially a knowledge of working with Excel, AccPac, Access, and Word. Knowledge of nursery plants would be an asset. Position would commence in March. Wages to commensurate with experience. Send your resume in confidence to:</p> <p>John Langendoen Willowbrook Nurseries Inc. 935 Victoria Avenue, RR #4 Fenwick ON L0S 1C0</p> <p>We thank you for your application, however only those considered will be notified.</p>	<p>See page 22 for more job opportunities</p>

Job Opportunities



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Christian University Education
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The King's University College, a Christian undergraduate university in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, has initiated a search for its third President. This person of faith, vision and commitment will lead the institution into the next exciting phase of its development. The Board of Governors, through its Presidential Search Committee, seeks candidates who have a bold, biblically-shaped vision for life, who demonstrate outstanding academic leadership with the ability to foster and build on existing traditions, and who show a proven capacity for passionately promoting the institution to a variety of audiences, enhancing its prominence, visibility and financial resources.

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The Search Committee will begin consideration of candidates in March 2004, and is seeking a highly qualified individual who can take office in the summer of 2005. Requests for information, expressions of interest, nominations, or suggestions of suitable candidates are invited. Applicants may direct a curriculum vitae, a letter of introduction and the names of three references to:

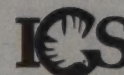
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James D. Bratt, Chair, EACRC Search Committee,

2321 Everest SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507 (jbratt@calvin.edu; 616/526-6198)

Teachers

BULKLEY VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

a school of 450 students located in the scenic Bulkley Valley of B.C., invites applications for a **principal** at its **elementary campus**, effective **August 1, 2004** (position involves approximately 50% teaching/ 50% administrative time). This campus has approximately 200 students from K-6. Bulkley Valley Christian is a school rooted in the reformed tradition, but contains a diverse denominational mix. Applications and inquiries for this position can be forwarded to:

Fred Reitsma

Education Committee Chairman
Bulkley Valley Christian School
PO Box 2117, Smithers BC V0J 2N0
Ph: 250-847-9833 Fax: 250-847-0184
Email: bvcselcm@telus.net

JARVIS DISTRICT CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

will need a Grade 6 teacher for a maternity leave effective April 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005. Continued employment as a teacher at JDCS after this leave is completed is a distinct possibility. A strength in teaching Science will be an asset. JDCS has a teaching staff of eleven and a total of 189 students. Qualified teachers may submit their letters of application or request more information contacting:

Mr. Garry Glasbergen, Principal
Jarvis District Christian School
PO Box 520, Jarvis ON N0A 1J0
Phone: 519-587-4444 (school)
Fax: 519-587-2985
905-765-7919 (home)
Email: jdcsc@kwic.com
website: www.jdcsc.ca

Events/Advertising

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion

- Jan 17** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Cresendo Male Choir 7:30 p.m. Wallaceburg Christian Reformed Church, 150 Bruinsma Ave, Wallaceburg. Freewill offering for the Canadian Bible Society. (519)637-4357
- April 10** Annual Festival of Praise by the Christian Male Chorus Association of South Western Ontario. 7:30 p.m. Centennial Hall, 550 Wellington St. London. Five choirs with over 200 men participating. Ticket: \$13 (519)451-5484 or email: jettrick@sympatico.ca For information: (519)637-4357.
- Apr. 24** The MEN OF PRAISE (from Woodstock) in concert, at the Ebenezer CRC, Jarvis Ont., at 7:30 pm. Freewill offering.
- May 2** Concert of Sacred Music by St. Thomas Cresendo Male Choir 7:30 p.m. Knox Presbyterian Church 55 Hincks St, St. Thomas. Freewill offering for Canadian Bible Society. (519)637-4357

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- Psalm 90:1

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News

Meeter Center for Calvin Studies to host scholars this summer

Being a Calvinist in the 16th or 17th century often meant being part of a persecuted faith. And that persecution had all kinds of ramifications – everything from seemingly trivial decisions about whether or not to eat fish during Lent to significant matters such as attending or not attending the marriage of a Catholic relative.

Those sorts of everyday struggles in the lives of early Calvinists will occupy the minds of visiting scholars for five weeks this summer, due to a sizeable National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant to Calvin College's H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies.

The \$82,000 grant from the NEH's Summer Seminars for College and University Teachers will enable 15 scholars to live and work on the Calvin campus as part of a Meeter Center seminar on "John Calvin and the Transformation of Religious Culture in Geneva, France and Beyond," to be held June 28 through July 30, 2004.

The seminar will home in on tensions in the lives of early Calvinists as they sought to practice their faith in a society that didn't recognize – or openly persecuted – that faith. Only scattered areas in Europe afforded Calvinists le-

gal rights, and day-to-day living tested these believers. The seminar will examine 16th and 17th-century societal infrastructure, offering segments devoted to liturgy and worship, education and training and social discipline.

Karin Maag, the director of the Meeter Center, will co-direct the seminar with Raymond Mentzer, a professor in Reformation Studies at the University of Iowa. Ideally, two schools of Calvin studies will converge at the seminar says Maag.

"There are people who study Calvin from a theological viewpoint," she says, "and there are those who study him from a socio-historical standpoint. What we aim to do is shuffle the two and get them to learn from each other."

Many scholars of the former group study Calvin's doctrines to apply them to today's theological debates. And while Maag says that has a purpose, it also can leave out any understanding of Calvin himself as a part of a wider tradition. And, she adds, it also leaves out any sense of the impact, or lack of impact, that Calvin's ideas may have had for his originally-intended audience.

Maag notes that Calvin's advice

for people who held Protestant beliefs, but lived in Catholic areas, was for them to either go into exile to a Protestant area, so they could live their faith purely without compromise, or to openly confess their faith as a Protestant, thereby risking imprisonment and execution.

"The 16th century," she says dryly, "was not big on toleration."

Maag and Mentzer, a renowned expert on Calvinism in France, will choose the 15 scholars from a pool of applicants. The NEH grant will provide the visitors with stipends, allowing them to live in Calvin's Knollcrest East apartments for the duration of the event. While attending the seminar sessions, the scholars will pursue their own research thanks to the Meeter Center's extensive collection.

"This is one of the foremost collections on John Calvin and Calvinism in North America," says Maag of the center, which numbers nearly 500 original, 16th-century books among its resources. "We have a very compact and accessible collection. People can come here and they don't have to wait two hours for someone to bring them a book – unlike in larger research libraries, especially in Europe."

Calvin Provost Joel Carpenter affirms the Meeter Center's prominence as a place of research.

The King's University College appoints new Vice President Academic

Edmonton, ALBERTA – The King's University College Board of Governors announced the appointment of Mr. John Sutherland, a scholar of business and economics, formerly Director of Public Relations at the Christian Labour Association of Canada in Abbotsford, B.C., as its new Vice President Academic. Mr. Sutherland will take office in July 2004, succeeding Dr. Keith Ward, who is retiring after 25 years of service to the University College.

Mr. Sutherland has an MBA from Queen's University and an MA in Biblical Studies from Trinity Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. He has taught in the business faculty at Trinity Western University and served there as Dean of the Faculty of Business and Economics. John has been at his current position as Director of Public Relations at the Christian Labour Association of Canada since 1999.

"Mr. Sutherland is an outstanding academic leader," said Mr. John Kamphof, Board Chair. "His approach to Christian scholarship and understanding of the tradition out of which King's does its academic and scholarly work is impressive. John's management, business and public relations experience and expertise, as well as his entrepreneurial spirit will be great assets to The King's University College." John Sutherland's appointment was unanimously ratified by The King's Board of Governors.

"With this grant from the NEH," he says, "the center can host a major national research seminar as well. It is highly unusual for a small college such as Calvin to be selected as the site for an NEH summer research seminar. We have much to offer, and I think that the NEH recognized that this would be a sound investment"

Maag, who wrote her Ph.D. on education in Geneva in the 16th century, is excited about next summer's discussions.

"I have always been fascinated by the whole question of how

communities expressed their faith," she says, "particularly in times of tension and religious change, and how this tension then affected these communities. How do they shape themselves? Calvinism as a movement is an example of how complex it can be to go from the ideas of a leader to a feasible, practical system. Basically, I'd like participants to think about the jump from ideology to practicality."

See the Meeter Center website at <http://www.calvin.edu/meeter/>

Redeemer's Teacher Education Program granted initial accreditation

Redeemer University College released the news Dec. 12 that the Accreditation Committee of the Ontario College of Teachers has granted initial accreditation to the university's new Teacher Education Program.

The program will prepare Redeemer education graduates for certification in the primary, junior and intermediate divisions (grades K-10) in all Ontario schools: Public, Catholic and independent. Shaped by the Standards of Practice of the Ontario College of Teachers and the mission of Redeemer's Education Department, the program consists of courses in child development and learning, teaching practice and professional knowledge, curriculum and teaching methodology as well as the equivalent of 16 weeks of practicum experience in Ontario schools. It may be taken as part of a 5-year program leading to both a B.A. or B.Sc. and a B.Ed. degree, or consecutively after completion of a B.A. or B.Sc. at Redeemer or another institution.

The Ontario Legislature granted Redeemer authority to confer the B.Ed. degree on June 26, 2003.

Redeemer President Justin Cooper pointed out that this is an important new step for Redeemer and for Christian education. "It provides the recognition our graduates require to serve in all Ontario schools and to seek certification in other provinces as well as other countries." He is especially pleased that Redeemer becomes the first Christian teachers' college in Ontario.

A public celebration of the milestone is scheduled for the campus on Friday, January 9 at 7:30 PM.

Recognized as an undergraduate university in Ontario in 1998, Redeemer now has an enrolment of over 800 students.



Celebration